# Reimagining the Filipino Nation : Insights from the Filipino Diaspora Experience in East Asia

# Reimagining the Filipino Nation: Insights from the Filipino Diaspora Experience in East Asia

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## List of Abbreviations of Main Terms

| | |
|---|---|
| ALT | Assistant Language Teachers |
| AMC | Asian Migrant Centre |
| AMCB | Asian Migrant Coordinating Body |
| APMM | Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants |
| APMMF | Asia Pacific Mission for Migrant Filipinos |
| ARB | Artists' Record Book |
| ATKI | *Asosiasi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia* (Association of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Hong Kong) |
| ATIS | Abra Tingulan Ilocano Society |
| BOE | Board of Education |
| CFC | Couples for Christ |
| CFO | Commission for Filipinos Overseas |
| CLAIR | Council of Local Authorities for International Relations |
| CMA | Center for Migrant's Advocacy |
| CORALL | Cordillera Alliance |
| CPP | Communist Party of the Philippines |
| DAWN | Development Action for Women Network |
| DOLE | Department of Labor and Employment |
| ERCOF | Economic Resource Center for Overseas Filipinos |
| FDW | Foreign Domestic Workers |
| GFMD | Global Forum on Migration and Development |
| GK | *Gawad Kalinga* (Give Care) |
| HTA | Hometown Associations |
| IMA | International Migrants Alliance |
| IP | Indigeous Peoples |
| JET | Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme |
| JFC | Japanese-Filipino Children |
| JICWELS | Japan International Corporation for Welfare Services |
| JPEPA | Japan Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement |
| KAKAMMPI | *Kapisanan ng mga Kamag-anak at Migranteng Manggagawang Pilipino* (Organization of the Filipino Migrant Workers and their Families) |
| LINKAPIL | *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (Link for Development Program) |

| | |
|---|---|
| MAW | Minimum Allowable Wage |
| MEXT | Ministry of Education, Arts, Science and Sports, Japan |
| MFA | Migrant Forum in Asia |
| MFMW | Mission for Migrant Workers |
| MNP | Movement of Natural Persons |
| MSAI-CDR | Migrant Savings and Alternative Investments for Community Development and Reintegration |
| ND | National Democracy |
| NDF | National Democratic Front |
| NGO | Non-Government Organizations |
| NPA | New People's Army |
| NRCO | National Reintegration Center for OFWs |
| OAV | Overseas Absentee Voting |
| OCW | Overseas Contractual Workers |
| OEDB | Overseas Employment and Development Board |
| OF | Overseas Filipinos |
| OFI | Overseas Filipino Investor |
| OFW | Overseas Filipino Worker |
| OPA | Overseas Performing Artists |
| OWWA | Overseas Workers Welfare Administration |
| PDOS | Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar |
| PHILCOMDEV | Philippine Consortium on Migration and Development |
| PKP | *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* (Philippine Communist Party) |
| PNB | Philippine National Bank |
| PO | Peoples' Organizations |
| POEA | Philippine Overseas Employment Agency |
| RA | Reaffirmist |
| RA | Republic Act |
| RA | Revolutionary Approach |
| RD | Radical Democratic Perspective |
| RJ | Rejectionist |
| TAN | Transnational Advocacy Network |
| UPHK | United Pangasinans in Hong Kong |

| | |
|---|---|
| UNICRM | UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrants and Members of their Families |
| UNIFIL | United Filipinos in Hong Kong |
| WELFUND | Welfare and Training Fund for Overseas Workers |
| 3K Jobs | *Kitanai , Kitsui and Kiken* (Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous) |

## Glossary of Main Terms

*Bagong Bayani* – literally modern-day heroes. The term used to refers to Filipino contractual labor migrant working abroad.

*Bagong Lipunan* – literally new society. The term refers to the official state policies under the Marcos dictatorship during the 1970's and 1980's.

*Balikbayan* - emigre returnee visitors.

*Barangay* – Filipino word for village.

*Bansa and Bayan* - *Bansa* refers to the country or state, while *Bayan* refers to the nation or hometown. The flexibility of *Bayan* is similar to the work *Patria*. Anderson explains this flexibility as: "patria is the wonderful Iberian word that can stretch from home-village, through home-town and home-region on to home-country" (1998: 60).

*Bilog* - literally round, refers to undocumented Filipino workers in Japan.

*Dekasegi* - refers to the labor migration of Nikkeijin to earn money.

(Filipina) *Hanayome* - rural mail-order brides.

*Japayuki* - literally "one who has travelled to Japan". Refers to Filipina entertainers in Japan.

*Japino* - literally Japanese - Pilipino, refers to children between Japanese and Filipino nationals. (See JFC and Shin-Nikkeijin)

*Juan Kaunlaran* – literally John Progress, refers to the official state image of the Filipino as promoted during the Ramos administration from 1992-1998.

*Kaigo-Fukushishi* - formal Japanese term for Caregiver / Social Worker under the JPEPA agreement

*Kangoshi* - formal Japanese term for Nurse.

*Kokusaika* – refers to the Internationalization policies of Japan.

*Maalwang Buhay* - literally, maayos na buhay, the good life.

*Maharlika* - Tagalog word for nobility.

*Mizushobai* - literally water trade, refers to the entertainment industry in Japan.

(Filipino) *Nikkeijin* – 2nd and 3rd generation Filipinos of Japanese descent, often refers to those who travel to Japan for work.

*Panalo and Talo* – literally winner and loser. This concept refers to the often fatalistic outlook of Filipino migrants who are primarily concerned with having positive outcomes on their migrant sojourn abroad.

*Shin-Nikkeijin* - literally new *nikkeijin*, refers to children of Japanese and Filipino nationals as differentiated from 2nd and 3rd generation Filipinos of Japanese descent .

*Rainichi* - literally "one who comes to Japan". This term is used by Ballescas (2007) to refer to Filipino nurse and caregiver migrants under the JPEPA agreement.

*Tabunka Kyousei* - Multicultural Coexistence, Japan's own version of Multiculturalism policies.

*Zainichi* - resident foreigners in Japan. This term used to refer to Korean and Chinese resident foreigners in Japan but recently has been used to refer to Filipino spouses and permanent residents who are living in Japan.

# Chapter One
# Reimagining the Filipino Nation:
# Insights from the Filipino Diaspora Experience in East Asia

## 1.1. Introduction and Relevance of Study

Ever since the start of the Marcos' policy of "manpower export" during the 1970's, the Philippines has become one of the top labor migrant sending country in the world. With the rising flow of labor migrant and remittances, the Philipppine state has also consistently attempted to reach out to migrants living and working abroad. This is mainly done through discourses and narratives that call to the nationalistic fervor of the Filipino diaspora.

While calls for nationalism have been promoted through various discourses from the *Balikbayan* (émigré returnee visitors) and *Bagong Bayani* (modern-day heroes) to the Global Filipino, a related question is often asked: How does migration affect the nationalism and feelings of patriotism of the migrant? Does nationalism increase, decrease or is it the same level as before the migrant journey? Some scholars describe the feelings and actions brought about by nationalism as a phenomenon exhibiting long-distance nationalism (Anderson 1992). This phenomenon can be simply stated by the assumption that as a person spends time away from the homeland, the migrant begins to miss his homeland and through this process appreciate his own culture and society more. This longing for the homeland then leads the migrant to desire to "contribute" to the homeland or help his countrymen from abroad.

In answering whether the diaspora experience leads to the increase or decrease of nationalism, some scholars such as Rafael (2000) argue that it depends on the type of his migrant journey. In his essay "Ugly Balikbayans and Heroic OCWs" from his book *White Love and Other Events in Philippine History*, Rafael posits that nationalism increases if a migrant is a temporary and contractual laborer. As migrant workers, they are patriots because their migrant journey is seen as a sacrifice to support their families and help the nation through their hard-earned remittances. This line of thinking reflects the classic narrative of the *Bagong Bayani*. For permanent migrants who have decided to settle abroad, their nationalism decreases because they have turned their backs to

the homeland to pursue the "American dream". Indeed, this belief in the unpatriotism of permanent migrants reflects the classic narrative of the ungrateful *Balikbayan* which was already articulated as early as the 1960's. Political activists, such as Sison who started the national democratic movement (ND) of the Philippine left explains that:

> There is a worse kind of Filipino professional than the one who finally returns to this country. He is either a doctor, a nurse or some other professional who prefers to stay in the United States as a permanent resident or who tries to become an American citizen. This type of fellow is a subtle betrayer of his country and, in the most extreme cases, a loud-mouthed vilifier of the Filipino people. He goes to the foreign land for higher pay and that is all he is interested in. We criticize him but we must as well condemn the government that allows him to desert and that fails to inspire him to work for the people. (Sison 1967:78)

Above all, it is assumed that these talented migrants are the cause of problems of brain drain as they bring their much needed skills in their new countries of residency.

While Rafael posits the increasing or decreasing of nationalism, some scholars merely describe that nationalism simply changes character, especially of the second-or third-generation migrants. Scholars such as Mendoza (2008), Susan Quimpo (2005) and Aguilar (2004) describe how Filipino-Americans search for their ethnic roots and Filipino identity while at the same time juggling their ethnic roots with their American identity. While some scholars describe how nationalism changes among the Filipino diaspora, some scholars meanwhile highlight how nationalism becomes a source of tension, especially among "elite migrants", or those who went abroad and consciously promised to return. Ong and Cabanes (2011) describe how scholars studying abroad are neither temporary migrants nor permanent migrants, yet feel the pressure to return home and serve the country as "elite migrants".

Although the assertions and discussions raised by these scholars are important, they often fail to consider the views among migrants themselves. As such, the more interesting question would be: How are migrants affected by appeals to nationalism? This dissertation attempts to answer by exploring how migrants themselves view the contending and diverging calls for nationalism by the state, advocacy groups and diaspora communities, of which the academic literature has been limited. By looking further into the quality and character of the nationalist rhetoric, this dissertation will show that the type of calls for nationalism changes depending on the main social actor

involved. As such, this dissertation proposes a typology that distinguishes between official nationalism, alternative nationalism and demotic nationalism.

Another question that is related to the appeals of nationalism can be phrased as: How are the concepts of nationalism, nation and identity inter-related, especially as directed towards migrants? This dissertation will show that previous literature has not discussed this as much, nor is discussed in a focused manner. Some to the themes to be discussed in the succeeding chapters include: the impact of the diaspora experience to the concept of the nation and national identity, the impact of nationalism to the migrant themselves, and the impact of diaspora experience to the nation itself.

### 1.1.1. Filipino Diaspora Communities in East Asia

In order to address these themes, this dissertation will explore the dynamics among case studies of Filipino diaspora communities. While much literature has already discussed the dynamics of the Filipino diaspora in the U.S., this dissertation will explore Filipinos in East Asia, namely from Japan and Hong Kong in order to address the literature gap on Filipino migration to the region. Indeed, although much research has already been done in Filipino migration toward the region, the research has often seen migration to East Asia as the primary destination for temporary labor migration since the emergence of state-sponsored migration during the 1970's. While this might still be the dominant pattern even for certain migrant groups, parts of East Asia are becoming destinations for settlement and permanent migration. This trend, together with lack of research exploring the practice of nationalism among Filipino diaspora groups in the region will be addressed through this dissertation. Other than addressing the literature gap, this thesis specifically focuses on the case studies of the Filipino diaspora in East Asia in order to better elucidate the dynamics of contending diaspora nationalisms. Through this process, it aims to challenge the old assumptions on how the Filipino diaspora understand and practice nationalism, Filipino identity and the imagining of the Filipino nation as a whole.

## 1.2. Research Questions

After discussing the main themes related to migration, nationalism and how nationalism is promoted toward migrants, this dissertation aims to answer the

following research questions:

1. How has the concept of the Filipino nation been imagined by the state, advocacy groups and diaspora communities? What are the contending views among these three groups? How has the state and advocacy groups promoted nationalism to reach out towards the Filipino diaspora?

2. In light of the contending attempts by the state and advocacy groups to define the Filipino nation as a means to reach out to the diaspora, how do migrants themselves understand and view their national identity and their role as migrant citizens?

3. How has the Filipino diaspora experience impacted on the thinking of Filipinos regarding the Filipino nation, Philippine nationalism and national identity?

### 1.3. Theoretical Framework

After discussing the relevance of the study and the main research questions, this section will explain the theoretical framework used to analyze and guide the data to prove the main arguments of the dissertation and is divided into four sub-sections. The first two sub-sections frame research questions one and two by discusses the various meanings of the term diaspora and the specific definition that is used in this dissertation, to be followed by a brief introduction on the typologies of diaspora nationalisms. The third and the fourth sub-section meanwhile addresses the third research question by framing the reimagining of the nation by deconstructing Anderson's theory of "imagined communities" and the effect of the diaspora experience in the reimagining of the Filipino nation.

#### 1.3.1. Filipino Diaspora and the Filipino Nation

Many terms have been used to refer to overseas Filipinos and migrants. Other than the narrative discourses which we will explore later, most terms are related to specific "diaspora identities" which are either destination based - Filipino-Americans, Filipino-Australians; or work based - entertainers, seafarers, domestic workers, nurses. While official statistics and data usually categorizes overseas Filipinos as either being temporary/contractual, permanent or undocumented migrants under land-based migrants, and another category for sea-based migrants, the term "overseas Filipinos"

does not show the nuanced dynamics and multiple identities and categories in which the Filipino migrant, their families and communities embody. Furthermore, since using the term "migrants" is ambiguous since it usually refers to temporary and cyclical labor migrants, this thesis seeks a more inclusive term that encompasses the scope and the dynamics between these transnational actors, the host and home states and their families in the homeland. This thesis proposes the term "Filipino diaspora" to refer to all types of Filipino migrants, their families and their communities both at home and in their host societies. However like any social science term, this means different things depending on the scholar and the approach given.

In his work tracing the history and usage of the concept diaspora, Dufoix traces how the term diaspora has always been contentious and has various meanings depending on the social actor. Indeed he explains that diaspora used to refer exclusively to the traditional and religious diasporas, such as the Jewish, Armenian, African diasporas (2003). While Dufoix discusses the theoretical and historical dimensions of the term diaspora, he nevertheless uses a definition that is too broad or simplistic. Another scholars meanwhile discusses the political dimension of diaspora, focusing on conflict diasporas and their practice of long-distance nationalism. One such scholar is Lyons who defines a diaspora population as a "particular subset of migrants which are characterized by the social networks that link groups in host countries to their brethren in the homeland" and explains that joining a diaspora is largely a matter of choice, in which an individual migrant may or may not be a member of a diaspora (2006: 113). In this sense, he uses an exclusive definition of diaspora and explains that only a small fraction of these who are involved regularly in the organizations and networks that seek to link the community in the United States (or host country) back to the homeland are members of the diaspora. Furthermore, he emphasizes the political activities of diaspora and cites the existence of conflict diasporas and the implications of their attachment to the homeland. He explains:

> "Conflict-generated diasporas sustain and sometimes amplify their strong sense of symbolic attachment to the homeland. "Homeland" is often understood in specific territorial terms where a space from which a group has been forcefully detached assumes a high symbolic value. Globalization has increased rather than decreased this particular type of territorial attachment and thereby shaped the dynamics of certain homeland conflicts." (2006: 111)

Again, while Lyons uses a more concrete definition of diaspora, it nevertheless focuses

too much on the political aspects which straddles the conceptual borders between diaspora and transnational identities. Indeed while Lyons accounts for the strong ties and activities of the diapora to their homeland, other scholars use the term diaspora in a more inclusive sense. Exploring the activities and dynamics of the Filipino-American community in Hawaii, Okamura argues that Filipino-Americans are already transnational in character and as such, sees themselves as part of a global Filipino diaspora (1998). While he uses a more inclusive conception of diaspora, his study doesn't dwell too much on the theoretical dimensions and features of what makes the Filipino overseas community a diaspora.

Accounting all the multiple definitions of diaspora, this thesis uses Cohen's definition which cites specific features that best reflect the Philippine overseas migrant experience. In his study describing the various definitions of diaspora, Cohen explains that it has gone through four distinct phases. First, the classical term was mainly confined to the Jewish experience. During this initial phase, other groups of people were included, such as the Greek, Armenian, African, Irish and later Palestinian Diasporas. As with the Jewish experience, these Diasporas with a capital "D" denotes a cataclysmic and traumatic event, which led to the scattering and victimhood of these peoples. In the second phase, the term was more inclusive and refers to different peoples who either had applied the term to themselves or had the label conferred unto them. During this phase, various scholars emphasized "their historical experiences, collective narratives and differing relationships to homelands and host lands" (Cohen 2008: 1). The third phase meanwhile was marked by social constructionist critiques of the `second phase`, which aimed to decompose the two major building blocks delimiting the diasporic concept, that of `homeland` and `ethnic/religious communities`. In their view, identities have become deterritorialized and constructed and deconstructed in a flexible and situational way. As such, the conceptualization of diaspora itself had to be radically reordered. Finally, the current phase ushered in a period of conceptual consolidation in which the social constructionist critiques were partially accommodated and is marked by a modified reaffirmation of the diasporic idea (2008: 1-2).

Based on his analysis of the phases of diaspora studies, Cohen attempts to define a diaspora through their nine features. First, is the dispersal from an original homeland,

often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions. Second, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions. The third feature that figures prominently is the presence of a collective memory and myth of the homeland. Fourth, a diaspora has an idealized vision of a real and imagined ancestral home to return and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity, even its creation. Fifth, the presence of frequent development of return movement to the homeland even if many in the group are satisfied with only a vicarious relationship or intermittent visits to the homeland. Sixth, the presence of a strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history, the transmission of a common cultural and religious heritage and the belief in a common fate. Seventh, a troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance. Eighth, a sense of empathy and co-responsibility with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement even where home has become more vestigial. Lastly, the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism (Cohen 2008: 17).

In closer reading of Cohen's definition of a diaspora, features one to eight are centrifugal in character, those which highlight how the diaspora focuses back toward the homeland. Feature nine meanwhile is centripetal in character, one characterizing how the diaspora focuses on how to integrate toward the new host society. Based from Cohen's definition and features of a diaspora, the Filipino diaspora certainly fits into these characteristics, although certain features seemed to be more prominent. Among the features described by Cohen, the experiences of Filipino permanent migrants are highlighted in 5th, 7th and 9th features, with the 7th feature applicable to Filipino temporary/contractual migrants as well.

In describing the overseas Filipino communities in East Asia, the 9th characteristic features prominently in the dynamics and changing qualities of migrants in the region. Although East Asia has traditionally been the destination of temporary labor migrants since the emergence of state-sponsored labor migration, certain migrant groups have seen parts of East Asia as destinations for settlement and more permanent migration. This is especially true for Filipino migration to Japan, wherein migrants are settling permanently and is fast becoming a major destination for permanent migration outside

of the traditional destinations such as the US, Canada or Australia (CFO 2011b). Indeed while Japan is still seen as a "non-traditional migrant receiving country", it has exhibited patterns showing that it is becoming a more open and multicultural nation (Kondo 2002). How does the emergence of Japan as a destination for permanent settlement relate to the reimagining of a Filipino nation? This relates to how East Asia and Japan in particular, is now seen as a new alternative destination for permanent migration, outside of the United States, and through this process, reevaluate the national Other of the Philippine nation. This is exemplified when Ventura describes that for Filipino migrants, Japan is becoming the Philippines' "Second America":

> "There is no Japanese dream, and yet Japan, for the Filipino, has become a second America. We do not dream of becoming Japanese citizens - even for brides who achieve this, it is a secondary consideration. We do not imagine that we will settle here forever. We know that we will not be accepted. Still more and more, we see Japan as part of our future" (2006:140).

This has a big implication because it shows that through the Filipino diaspora experience in East Asia, the United States is not the sole national Other of the Philippines. Aguilar explains this as: "the global dispersion of OCWs, both domestic service workers and professionals, has consequently buttressed nation-building, not so much in monetary terms, but in terms of resuscitation and fortification of the Filipino national imagination. No longer is the U.S. the sole Philippine Other" (1996: 111). As such, the Filipino diaspora experience in East Asia shapes and opens up further conceptions of what it means to be a Filipino, both at home and at overseas communities.

Moving away from the Filipino diaspora experience in East Asia, towards the reimagination of a deterritorialized and larger Filipino nation, it is the 8th feature that best describes why overseas Filipinos and migrants now see themselves as being part of a global Filipino diaspora. This is because they imagine themselves as part of a larger Filipino nation, in which their sense of horizontal comradeship extends beyond formal citizenship status, social standing, job descriptions and migrant destinations. This is especially true with the growth and promotion of the concept of the "Global Filipino", who is part of a Global (Filipino) nation. Indeed, although such conceptualizations can be described as being a form of Long-Distance Nationalism, this will be examined further in the next section discussing how the Filipino nation is being imagined and

reimagined by the state, civil society groups and the migrants / Filipino diaspora themselves.

### 1.3.2. Contending Diaspora Nationalisms

To analyze the dynamics of the contending diaspora nationalism and to highlight the main features on how various social actors promote, negotiate and promote these various nationalisms, this dissertation will use Baumann's approach for discourse analysis, which distinguishes between dominant and demotic discourses (1996). This sub-section will briefly discuss the theoretical basis and features of these diaspora nationalisms. However, a more in-depth discussion of these typologies can be found in the third chapter of this dissertation.

Differentiating between dominant (official) and demotic discourse, this dissertation posits that the various migrant discourses such as the *Bagong Bayani* and Global Filipino are used by the state as the dominant discourse. It is important to note that these discourses were not all necessarily "created" and formulated by the state through official policy and propaganda agencies, indeed these discourses have grown and have emerged organically. While this may be the case, these discourses are nevertheless used by state and by opposing migrant advocacy groups as reinforced by mass media to promote their own agenda and goals. While these dominant discourses and counter-discourses are directed towards the migrants, migrants themselves interpret and negotiate these dominant discourses and reshape it into their own popular understandings. These demotic (popular) discourses can be described as being flexible, complex, situational, and multifaceted.

#### Typologies of Diaspora Nationalisms

Jumping off Anderson's conceptualization of Long-distance Nationalism and Sidel's discussion on the impact of migration to the understanding and practice of Philippine nationalism, this dissertation introduces the concept and typologies of diaspora nationalism. Seen as a form of long-distance nationalism, this research defines Diaspora Nationalism as the process in which various social actors use Filipino nationalism, national identity and Filipinoness as a means to reach out to the Filipino diaspora and promote their own agenda, directed toward the state and the migrants.

This research theorizes and conceptualizes three ideal types of diaspora nationalisms, namely that of official nationalism, alternative nationalism and demotic nationalism.

Although there has been literature discussing how the state and civil society groups have reached out towards migrants to promote their agenda and interpretation of the Philippine diaspora experience, much of the discussion assume that migrants are passive receptacles of these diverging notions of national identity and calls for nationalism. Nevertheless there have been also studies that have shown migrants as exhibiting agency and are not passive receptors of these nation-building discourses (Tyner 2009, Hau 2004), it has not been framed within a continuum of diverging nationalisms directed towards the migrants.

As such this dissertation proposes three main typologies of what can be conceptualized as "diaspora nationalisms" which can be described as the diverging nationalisms and ideologies directed towards the interpretation of the Philippine diaspora experience. This section of the dissertation will briefly describe the logic of these typologies, however a more in-depth discussion on the typologies of diaspora nationalisms will be accorded in the third chapter of this dissertation.

#### 1.3.2.1. Official Nationalism

The first major typology is what can be described as Official Nationalism. While nationalism theory often discuss how the state promotes its own version of official state ideology and nationalism to maintain the coherence of the state, such as through the modernism tradition that "regards the nation and nationalism as inherently modern phenomena, with the nation as an essentially modern construct and nationalism as its modern cement, both resulting from the specifically modern conditions of capitalism, industrialism, mass communications and secularism, and consciously designed by elites to meet the requirements of modernity" (Smith 1995: 35), this dissertation distinguishes between nationalisms directed towards the Filipino diaspora by the state, namely that of State-Led and representations of official nationalism by the Philippine elite.

**State-Led**

While there are various definitions and conceptualization of Official Nationalism, this dissertation uses the definition proposed by Anderson:

> The form of nationalism, which surfaces as an emanation and armature of the state. It manifests itself, not merely in official ceremonies of commemoration, but in a systematic program, directed primarily, if not exclusively, through the state's school system, to create and disseminate an official nationalist history, an official nationalist culture, through the ranks of its younger, incipient citizens – naturally, in the state's own interests. These interests are first and foremost in instilling faith in, reverence for, and obedience to, its very self. (1994: 103).

Borrowing from the classical modernist paradigms that followed models of "nation-building" (Smith 1998: 2-3) this dissertation views official nationalism as a form of diasporic nationalism that focuses particularly on how the state creates official versions of images, modern myths and discourses to reach out to their migrants abroad. This was expressed when the state uses various discourses of the *Balikbayan* to the *Bagong Bayani* to promote state migration policies, maintain the migrants' ties to the homeland and to ask for their help in building the nation. This type of nationalism also includes policies of the state towards its migrants that pursued "instrumental citizenship" to lend legitimacy and stability to state or regime (Aguilar 1999: 316).

**Elitist Nationalism**

Another nationalism type that this dissertation proposes that is related to official nationalism is what can be referred as "elitist nationalism", or the type of nationalism that has elements of official nationalist discourse which finds resonance among the Philippine elite and is promoted by them. This process shows how official state discourses is also shaped by the ideas and concepts promoted by the nation's elite, as a way of spreading their values and maintaining their social standing. Although it has to be pointed out that elitist nationalism is thematically separate from official nationalism since they are not part of the state, their views on what represents proper Filipino nationalism reinforces the same themes and stance as the state's official nationalism. This is not surprising since Philippine political life has always been described as being elite dominated, either through bossism (Sidel 1999), control by the patrimonial-oligarchic elite (Hutchcroft 1998) and through political families (McCoy 1993).

This is exemplified in Aguilar's seminal discussion called the "Dialectics of Transnational Shame" in which he describes how the state and the elites are most affected by the more problematic and vulnerable aspects of Philippine labor migration (1996). In particular, he cites the situation in which the majority of the labor migrants going to East Asia and Southern Europe are foreign domestic workers, the word "Filipino" has become synonymous with "maids". This was exemplified when the Filipino Association of Singapore published a letter to the Strait Times stating that:

> Not all Filipinos are maids. A large percentage in Singapore and around the world are working in the professional force. Therefore, allowing such insensitive remarks on air is misleading and gives the misconception or wrong impression that "Filipinos are generally maids" (as cited in Aguilar 1996: 122).

Aguilar argues that when the occasions arise in which "the good name of the Filipino" is compromised, they do respond but in a manner that dissociates themselves from domestic workers (122).

Other than the case of transnational shame and the "good name of the Filipino" affected by its migrant workers, this type includes the initiatives by the Philippine elite and middle classes to promote their version of Philippine development and democracy through the tapping of migrant resources (Tigno 2007). This will be discussed in particular by the case studies of middle class / elite led Christian social renewal movement by *Gawad Kalinga*, and other middle class groups to promote middle class values (Abinales 2010, Pinches 2010).

#### 1.3.2.2. Alternative Nationalism

In contrast to the role of the state and elite-led Official-Elite Nationalism to reach out toward the diaspora, several scholars have pointed out to the growing views that are critical to the state migration policies and its use of discourses to promote official state agendas. In her study exploring the use of the *Bagong Bayani* to discipline and incorporate the diaspora under the nation, Rodriguez argues the existence of an "alternative nationalism" for migrants, which she defines as a "politicized and historicized national identity that posits a link between Filipino migrants, emigrants and those who continue to live in the Philippines not merely as Filipinos but as Filipinos

displaced by global capitalism relegating them to labor as ethnicized low-wage workers around the world" (2002: 354).

While Philippine migrant civil society is known for their strong advocacy networks which has led to the comparative high level of migrant protection that Filipino migrants enjoy (Asis 2006a), there has been studies that have shown that the networks espousing alternative nationalism is not a single nor homogenous network of advocacy groups. In his research exploring the dynamics of the migrant advocacy movement in Hong Kong, Rother mentions the presence of two clusters of civil society groups (2009), which are manifested by how they organize in Hong Kong, in the Philippines, and in the Asian region. Other scholars meanwhile point out how this split in the movement brings about its weakness (Constable 2009, Weekley 2004) and also reflect the same patterns of division by various civil society movements in the Philippines. In order to conceptually clarify this division, this dissertation proposes the subdivision of groups following the revolutionary approach and radical democratic perspective.

**Revolutionary Approach (RA) and the Radical Democratic Perspective (RD)**

In his study exploring the split among the civil society groups of the political left in the Philippines, Quimpo compares the cleavage within the Philippine left to a comparable division of Peru's civil society movement (2008: 192). Citing the emergence of two clashing strategic perspectives of the Peruvian Left's involvement in local politics, Schonwalder describes the groups as following either:

> The "revolutionary approach" holds that the Left should make local government serve mainly as a venue for ventilating popular demands, which are deemed "unfulfillable" under the existing order, to build a political movement capable of overthrowing the state. The "radical-democratic perspective" postulates that leftist intervention in local politics "should serve to demonstrate its capacity to govern within the existing political institutions while opening them up to popular participation from below (1998: 76-77).

Using the same typology of approaches as suggested by Schonwalder and Quimpo, this dissertation will use the same typology to define and differentiate the diverging approaches and strategies employed by the migrant civil society movement in the Philippines and in East Asia. Indeed, the next chapters will show how the various migrant advocacy groups can be defined by how they work toward migrant rights and protection through their diverging of strategies and ideology. This is exemplified by the

Asian Migrant Coordinating Body (AMCB) cluster of "grassroots organizations" focus on fighting for migrant rights by appealing for better state protection and laws, while the other cluster led by the Asian Migrant Centre (AMC) views that the best way to promote protection is by concentrating on the migration governance in the regional level.

While various aspects and trends have been discussed, it should be pointed out that while these coalitions exists, they are nevertheless ideal types and as such, there will be cases of some NGOs and organizations which explicitly follow the ideals of their migrant advocacy cluster, and yet do activities and strategies diverging from their primary objectives.

#### 1.3.2.3. Demotic Nationalism

Finally the last typology proposed by this thesis is what we theorize as demotic nationalism. From the word demotic which means "everyday", this third typology highlights the grey areas that lie in between and overlap the conceptual boundaries of official and alternative nationalism. Arguing that demotic nationalism is neither pro nor anti-state, rather it is defined by its negotiated nature.[1] It is dynamic, fluid and differs depending on the actor involved. This conceptualization of the term demotic nationalism takes inspiration from two sources. The first one jumps off Baumann's concept of the "demotic discourse" in his book *Contesting Culture: Discourses of Identity in Multi-Ethnic London* which explores the discourses directed toward South Asian communities in multi-ethnic London (1996). In his book he distinguishes between the dominant discourses on multiculturalism as promoted by the state and how these communities themselves have their own demotic interpretation of these discourses. The other source is Hedman and Sidel's discussion that the Philippine migrant experience has become a new source of nationalism which is exclusive from the official nationalism promoted by the state, which they refer to as a "popular nationalism". Arguing that this popular nationalism has its basis on common popular experiences and

[1] An interesting parallel with the demotic dimension of migrants is the concept of the Zomia as developed by historian Willem van Schendel and developed by James Scott on his study of highland communities in Southeast Asia. Scott explains how peoples from the highland region in Southeast Asia attempt to escape the reaches of the state by going into the mountains (2009). Much in the same way that the state and advocacy groups "reaches out" towards migrants, they too "escape" by expressing their agency in their negotaited understanding and practice of diaspora nationalism.

share cultural/economic products (2000), this dissertation's conceptualization of demotic nationalism engages from their interpretation of popular nationalism into a demotic form nationalism within a continuum of diaspora nationalisms.

Although more theorizations and discussions of demotic nationalism will be discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, we characterize demotic nationalism as having three main features, namely: 1) it can be described as being a negotiated and popular understanding of the dominant discourses directed towards the migrants by the state and advocacy groups, 2) it is seen as a having its own unique new basis which is distinct from the diverging versions promoted by the state and advocacy groups, indeed it is based on the shared lived experiences of the diaspora; and lastly, 3) demotic nationalism reflects migrant agency through the migrants' instrumental and pragmatic way of thinking which goes beyond the assumptions of the state and advocacy groups.

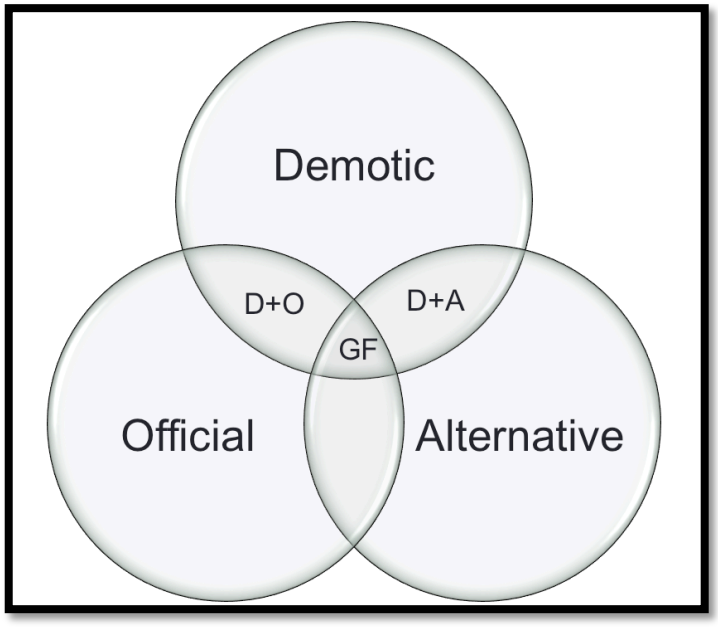
In discussing how demotic nationalism is expressed by Filipino diaspora communities in East Asia, one might ask if the demotic dimension has a clear-cut and specific agenda and value system similar to that of official and alternative nationalism? This dissertation will show that the main feature of demotic nationalism is its negotiated dimension: it is not necessarily pro nor anti-state, in fact the opinions and views of migrants also varies depending on the specific migrant group (e.g. blue or white-collar worker, permanent or contractual migrant, etc.). However their main common feature is its pragmatism which is always oriented toward positive outcomes of their diasporic journey. Due to this characteristic, this dissertation does not aim to provide and discuss the level of representativeness (in quantitative form) of demotic nationalism, rather it focuses on highlighting the dynamics and contours of demotic nationalism with both official and alternative forms of diaspora nationalism. As such, the succeeding chapters and case studies will show the primacy of demotic nationalism among migrants and that in spite of the contending views pushed upon by the official and alternative nationalisms toward the migrants, diaspora groups exhibit agency by adopting demotic nationalist agendas both while working abroad and in their home communities in the Philippines.

### 1.3.2.4. Dynamics between Diaspora Nationalisms

The Venn diagram below explains the dynamics between the three diaspora nationalism. Demotic nationalism is not necessarily pro nor anti-state, as we can see in the diagram, there are some issues and values that it shares with both official nationalism (D+O) and alternative nationalism (D+A). On the other hand, the diagram also shows that official and alternative nationalism rarely have commonalities. Furthermore, the common area shared by all three diaspora nationalisms are represents the reimaging of the Global Filipino nation (GF).

After discussing the contending nature of these three ideal types, this thesis argues that although demotic nationalism has primacy over the older forms of official and alternative nationalism, it nevertheless doesn't signal the demise of the other forms of nationalism. Rather, this thesis shows that as a consequence of the intermingling and interplay of these diaspora nationalism, then the ultimate symbol of nationalism - the Filipino nation - is by itself is also being reimagined as a totally new entity. This reimagined nation, the Global Filipino nation, is being reimagined as deterritorialized, which is not based on formal citizenship or nationalistic ideological persuasions, but above all on the shared lived experiences of being a migrant, of being part of the diaspora and the larger Global Filipino community.

**Figure 1.1. Dynamics between Diaspora Nationalism**




Note: D+O – Demotic and Official, D+A – Demotic and Alternative, GF – Global Filipino
Source: Figure prepared by author.

### 1.3.3. The Philippines as a Reimagined Nation

Among nationalism scholars, various schools of thought have existed to analyze the origin, formation and dynamics of nations, nationalism and national identity. These include theories, which are often labeled as either being part of the perennial/primordial, modernist, post-modern or ethno-symbolist schools of thought (Smith 2009).

While each of these theories offer useful and interesting insights especially in the context of the post-colonial nationalist experience of the Philippines, this dissertation will deconstruct the modernist tradition of Benedict Anderson's "Imagined Communities" as its main theoretical framework. Using his theories as a jumping point, this dissertation will deconstruct the main components of his theories to analyze how the Philippine nation has been impacted by the diaspora experience.

Deconstruction is a method of critizque developed by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida which aims to "expose and destabilize attempts to systematically ground knowledge in an absolute, foundational meaning, logic, or referent. Deconstruction is used to criticize Western culture's search for ultimate meaning or truth, what is often referred to as the 'transcendental signified' and the supposed ability to translate this truth through language" (Hooker and Murphy 2005: 189).[2] While deconstruction is often used in linguistics and in literary studies, its method is also useful in the social sciences. In particular, it entails "discovering a fundamental binary opposition in an argument or text (such as presence/absence), exposing its hierarchical relationship, revealing the reliance of one concept upon the other, and subordinating the previously dominant idea" (Hooker and Murphy 2005: 190).

In his seminal book "Imagined Communities", Anderson defines the nation as an imagined political community, which is imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign (2003: 6). Based on this most basic definition, this research explores these main concepts to analyze further how the Philippines imagines and reimagines itself as

[2] For a more detailed discussion on Derrida and his method of deconstruction, see Silverman (2002: 110-118).

a community affected by impact of the Philippine migration, particularly with the advent of institutionalized labor migration.

Using this approach, the four major elements of Anderson's "Imagined Community": imagined, limited, sovereign, and community; will be deconstructed and through this process show that having simple binaries of among these four concepts doesn't address the literature and conceptual gap that today's transnational migration studies entails.

#### 1.3.3.1. Deconstructing "Imagined"

Using Anderson's framework, a nation is said to be *imagined* primarily because the people never know all of their fellow members. He explains that a nation "is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the imaged of their communion" (2003:6). This can also be said to the Philippine case.

During the Spanish colonial period, *Filipinos*, especially the *illustrado* class saw themselves as part of the Spanish motherland, which as part of the propaganda movement campaigned for reforms and representation at the Spanish parliament.[3] As the Philippine nationalist movement grew from being reform oriented towards an independence movement, the *Filipinos*, which refer to all the peoples living in the Philippine islands, began to imagine themselves as being a distinct and sovereign nation. During the American colonial period, the country began to imagine itself as being the a democratic nation in Asia with the guidance of the United States.[4] As the country became independent after the Second World War and moved from democratic governments into the Marcos dictatorship and into the restoration of democracy, the

[3] The term *Filipino* originally referred to the Philippine-born Creole Spanish nationals (*peninsulares*) and the Spanish mestizo class in the Philippine islands. This identity expanded into the burgeoning *illustrado* elite and middle class of educated native and mestizo families. It was Dr. Jose Rizal, the writer and nationalist who was considered the "First Filipino" when he conceived the *Filipino* as encompassing all the peoples living in the Philippine islands.

[4] The narrative of the Philippines becoming America's "little brown brother" by following the US democratic model as the "bastion of democracy in Asia" is one of the main criticisms of the raised by the Philippine left against the state, particularly by the national democratic movement. This mass movement argues that the problems of the country were caused by "US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism" (Sison 1967:3).

basis of nationalism among Filipinos has been distinctly anti-colonial (as it looks into its past), and at the same time anti-feudalism and anti-dictatorship (reflecting on the experiences from the post-colonial governments until the Marcos regime). This is perhaps best expressed by the presence and growth of the national democracy movement of the Philippine left, which peaked during the Marcos period (Sison 1967).

With the advent of state-led policies of labor migration since the Marcos era until the present period, Filipinos began to reimagine their national identity in light of the massive movement of Filipinos across the globe. Labeling Filipinos as *Balikbayan* (returning émigré visitors) and *Bagong Bayani* (modern-day heroes), the diaspora experience has become ingrained in the national psyche, creating an inclusive sense of national identity – reaching out towards its migrants across the world and the members of its diaspora who have decided to permanently settle in the North America, Australia and parts of Europe.

While much literature has focused on the changing national identity of the Filipino in light of the diaspora experience, this research argues that the Philippine diaspora experience, especially brought by the intensification and institutionalization of migration, has forced the nation to reimagine not only its national identity and its practice of nationalism, but also rather the nation itself.

#### 1.3.3.2. Deconstructing "Limited" (Inclusive/Exclusive)

Anderson describes a nation as being seen as *limited* "because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations" (2003: 7). While his conception of a nation as being limited or static in a sense, the Philippine diaspora experience has shown that the nation is now being seen as more dynamic. Indeed, the dynamic character of a nation was discussed by Smith in his chapter entitled "Nation: Invented, Imagined, Reconstructed?" in which he posits that the concept of the nation is constantly in a flux and as such, it can in turn be invented, imagined or even reconstructed (2004).

This dynamics of the concept of the nation is exemplified by the Philippine case. While the Philippines as a nation-state hasn't changed its boundaries since its

independence after the Second World War, the Philippine diaspora experience has drastically changed the scope of the imagined Filipino nation, as its people are beginning to live across the globe.[5] While other countries with a significant portion of their population living abroad see their nation and diaspora communities as being expansive, most of these movements are concentrated within their neighboring regions. This includes the conceptualization of transnational communities by the Latin American migrants to the United States (Portes etal 2007), Turks and Kurdish migrants to parts of Western Europe (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003) and the porous borders in Southeast Asia between Indonesia and Malaysia, and the Mekong River region (Tigno 2003). The movement of Filipinos meanwhile are widely scattered across the world, with their migrant movement (both temporary and permanent) spread to over multiple destination and regions. Above all, this movement extends to both land-based migrants and sea-based migrants, in which more than 40% of commercial seafarers are Filipinos (Swift 2011).

In deconstructing Anderson's conceptualization of "limited", he explains that the nation is imagined as limited since the imagined nation has always been seen as having distinct and limited borders which is a reference point to other neighboring nations. While his conceptualization of the nation as being limited in the sense of having formal borders and state boundaries, the Philippine migrant experience has clearly shown that for the Filipino diaspora, the nation is now imagined as being more deterritorialized and can exists in their various host countries as well. Indeed, this deteritorriality is reflected in the practice of "flexible citizenship" by some Filipinos, especially the highly-skilled and mobile white-collar workers.[6]

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[5] Exceptions to this is the contested territory of the Spratly Islands (known as the *Kalayaan* or Freedom Islands) in the South China Sea (which is also labeled in 2011 as the *West Philippine Sea*), the attempt of Marcos to annex Sabah in the 1970s (Vitug and Gloria 2000) and the secessionist movement in Mindanao by the *Bangsamoro* nationalists (Quimpo 2002).

[6] Flexible citizenship is defined by Ong as the "cultural logics of capital accumulation, travel, and displacement that induce subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions. In this quest to accumulate capital and social prestige in the global arena, subjects emphasize, and are regulated by, practices favoring flexibility, mobility, and repositioning in relation to markets, governments, and cultural regimes. These logics and practices are produced within particular structures of meaning about family, gender, nationality, class mobility, and social power" (Ong 1999:6).

Moreover, while the Philippine nation has limited and finite borders, the Philippine migrant experience clearly shows that the conceptual boundaries and deterritorialization of Filipinos is conflicting with the theories espoused by methodological nationalism, which emphasizes and assumes that the nation/state/society is the natural social and political form in the modern world, even in an age of globalization and transnational movement among migrants (Wimmer and Schiller 2002). This research thus will show how the reimagining of the nation itself has seen the homeland as being more expansive and deterritorialized.

Lastly, it should be noted that while Anderson sees the nation as having limited boundaries, he does acknowledge that the practice of nationalism is not limited by borders. He explains discusses this on his essay describing the phenomenon of "long-distance nationalism" (1998, 1992). As such, although Anderson cannot be criticized entirely that his conceptualization of an imagined "limited" nation extends beyond borders into the conceptual debate on the practice of nationalism.

#### 1.3.3.3. Deconstructing "Sovereign"

Another feature of Anderson's framework is that a nation is imagined as *sovereign*, "because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm" (2003:7). While the modern nation-states under the Westphalia system have defined sovereignty as one of its central core elements, the age of migration has slowly eroded and blurred the limits of sovereignty. This is especially true for countries with a significant portion of its citizens living and working abroad. In the Philippines, the state has constantly reached out to its migrants by offering expanded external citizenship rights of migrant protection, access to social services and overseas absentee voting rights even to migrants living abroad. The limits of sovereignty as brought about by the Philippine diaspora experience have been a constant source of contention, not merely between the migrant labor sending and receiving states, but by migrant civil society movements, both based in the Philippines and various host countries.[7]

[7] A clear example of this is the diplomatic row between the Philippines and Singapore during the arrest, trial and execution of Flor Contemplacion, a Filipino domestic helper who was accused of murdering a fellow Filipino domestic helper. The Singaporean authorities found

Another aspect worth considering in discussions of sovereignty is the effect of migration on the primacy of the state. While Anderson's discussion of sovereignty refers to the role of imagined communities in nationhood and independence during the colonial period as nations entered the age of the "nation-state", the underlying assumption is that the state has primacy in the affairs of the nation. Indeed, among Philippine nationalism studies, nation has traditionally been seen as being state-centered, state-directed, state-dominated or at least having a top-down approach in its policy making and implimentation. As such, it was seen that it was natural for the state to demand the loyalty and patriotic duty of its citizens. However as Filipino migration has become entrenched both as a national policy and in the everyday lives of Filipinos in the home country and abroad, the growing role of migrant civil society advocacy campaigns together with the rapidly changing migration trends in the region has increasingly shown that migrants themselves are already showing a level of primacy over the state. This is reflected when migrants are began to demand their rights as migrant workers and are also becoming critical on the policies and lack of protection accorded to them by the state.

A good case study highlighting the agency of migrants was the changing role and actions of migrants and advocacy groups since the advent of labor migration policies during the Marcos regime. When Marcos initiated its policies of "manpower labor export" as a stopgap solution to the balance-of-payments problems of the country during the 1970's, the state consciously reached out and "disciplined" its migrants through various means and policies (Rodriguez 2010). Such policies included a demand for mandatory remittances through official state channels and banks, and compulsory pre-departure orientations for labor migrants or the so-called Overseas Contractual Workers (OCWs). In the same vein, Filipino permanent residents who had settled abroad or had become naturalized foreign citizens were being called as *Balikbayan*

her guilty and proceeded to execute her despite formal requests of consideration of the Philippine state. This led to the temporary suspension of diplomatic ties and labor migrant movement between these two countries. Above all, this event reiterated the call for more protection by migrant civil society, both in the Philippines and various Asian destinations. This culminated in the expedited passing of Republic Act 8042, the so-called Magna Carta for Overseas Filipino migrants. For further details on the passage of RA 8042 as law, see Aguilar (2000) and Tigno (1997).

(returning émigré visitors) and through various *Balikbayan* initiatives, they were seen as visiting tourists with the expectations that they would highlight in their new host societies the progress and advancements of the state's *Bagong Lipunan* (New Society) development initiatives. Through such policies, the state wanted to instill to the migrants and permanent residents that they were "ambassadors" of the Philippine (Marcos) government and as such, had to act in their best behavior while working and living overseas (Rafael 2000, Blanc 1994).

While the extent of Marcos' grip on Filipino migrants cannot be denied, an exception to this was the growing number of Filipino political exiles and activists who were based abroad.[8] Not only were these activists and political exiles involved in protest movements against the Marcos regime, a significant number of them began to campaign for migrant rights, usually framed within the larger umbrella campaign for the restoration of democracy in the home country. A key example was the campaign in the early 1980s by Filipino migrant activists and civil society based in Hong Kong who protested against the unpopular Executive Order no. 857. This order requires all overseas workers to remit through the banking system, which includes a penalty clause provided for sanctions against non-compliance. This campaign successfully pressured the Marcos government to repeal the penalty clause and led to the establishment of several migrant advocacy organizations, namely that of the United Filipinos in Hong Kong (UNIFIL) and *Kapisanan ng mga Kamag-anak at Migranteng Manggagawang Pilipino* (KAKAMMPI) in the Philippines (Alcid 2006: 343).

After Marcos repealed the penalty clause due to pressure from various migrant groups, migrant advocacy movements further grew in strength on their campaigns championing migrant rights and protection. These campaigns continued with successive Philippine governments, leading to more demands for migrant protection and external citizenship rights. Some of the results of these successful campaigns include the passing of the Republic Act 8042 or the Magna Carta for Filipino migrants of 1995, a comprehensive law that prioritizes migrant protection by the state; Republic Act 9189

[8] For a further discussion on political exiles during the Marcos regime, see Quimpo's discussion on the international work of the Philippine Left and the dynamics among the political exiles of Philippine left in the Netherlands (2008b, 2007).

or the Overseas Absentee Act of 2003, allowing overseas Filipinos to vote for national level elections in absentia; and Republic Act 9225 or the Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act of 2003, commonly known as the "Dual Citizenship Law" which gives provisions for the re-acquisition of Filipino citizenship by Filipinos who were naturalized into their new citizenship status.

Based from the discussions above, it was shown that while Anderson referred to sovereignty as freedom and self-determination in the context of the post-colonial experience in Asia, in today's migration issues, this concept now refers to the primacy of migrants and civil society from Philippine state control and its centralized and "top-down" bureaucracy. As more and more migrants and advocacy organizations have become more critical of the state, they see themselves as part of the nation, but not necessarily of the state and its central bureaucratic apparatus. As such, while the nation-state is still seen as one of the primary actors in international affairs and in migration issues, its sole primacy is now being challenged by the Philippine diaspora experience and that the role of the state in the everyday lives of migrants is not as big as it was originally assumed.

#### 1.3.3.4. Deconstructing "Community"

Lastly, Anderson describes a nation as being imagined as a *community*, "because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (2003:7). This is especially true for Filipinos who constantly rethink the extent of their membership to an imagined community that often times extend beyond their migrant work identities, regional hometown groups and social classes.

Traditionally, migrants within the same line of work, especially those employed in the so called 3D (dirty, difficult, dangerous) jobs are known to form deep horizontal bonds. Among Filipino migrants, labor migrants working in Saudi Arabia and in the Middle East are known for their strong bonds and support mechanisms (Dumia 2009). Another group is the Filipino seafarers, which in 2009 over 330,424 seafarers were deployed worldwide, comprising a substantial number of commercial shipping crews across the world (CFO 2009). Due to their specific circumstances, their experience

creates deep horizontal bonds among themselves, often times Filipino crew members refer to each other as being a member of a "*barkada*", so much so that they sometimes explicitly frame their familiarity in terms of kinship: "we are like family, we spend more time with each other than our real families" (Swift 2011: 280).[9]

As migrants within the same work occupation or living in similar host societies have a natural affinity to create strong bonds among each other, this research will show that the due to the diaspora experience, deep horizontal comradeship are created even among Filipinos of different experiences and backgrounds, going further and deeper in spite of distance away from the homeland. This inclusive sense of who constitutes the Filipino community is evidenced by the growing recognition and pride in second-generation hyphenated Filipinos in the realms of sports, entertainment and even politics (Bartholomew 2010, Mendoza 2008, Aguilar 2004). This inclusive sense of a larger, borderless Filipino community has even led Filipinos of privileged backgrounds to be offended when they are mistaken by their migrant brethren as fellow migrants whenever they visit or transit in Singapore or Hong Kong (Aguilar 1996).

To discuss the sharing of horizontal bonds and shared diasporic identities further, we can refer to some features of what Cohen describes as constituting a diaspora (2008:17). One such feature is the presence of a "collective memory and myth of the homeland". While this was initially conceptualized by Cohen to refer to myths by certain ethnic and political groups for nationhood and independence movements, this can also be applied to the creation of a culture of migration in the Philippines (Asis 2006b) and its attached modern secular myths. A prime example of this is the Myth of the *Bagong Bayani.*[10] Although the *Bagong Bayani* as a concept has not been framed as a myth in previous literature, this research agrees with Aguilar's assessment that such narratives and discourses of migration can be seen as a modern and secular version of the

[9] In Tagalog, *barkada* refers to a peer group of friends and is derived from the Spanish word "*barcado*" which means, "boat-load" or "passage in a boat". While this term is not only exclusively used among seafarers, its usage by them etymologically enriches the idea that they are "being in the same boat" (Swift 2011:280).

[10] Literally Modern Day Heroes. This term became popular after the Corazon Aquino administration inherited the state's labor migration apparatus under Marcos. It was used as a positive and inclusive term to thank the sacrifices of the Filipino migrants. This and other related migrant discourses would be discussed in the later chapters.

Philippines pre-colonial Southeast Asian traditional of seafaring pilgrimage. Aguilar explains that:

> Having embarked on the ritual of a labor contract pilgrimage, the labor migrant's identity is somehow suspended, gradually affirmed through remittances, but the ritual is not consummated until the economic journey reaches its completion with the return to the homeland, there to bring home economic and cultural capital: economic savings, the usual appliances, narratives of exploits, and cultural artifacts. Many are actually aware of the risks involved in this secular pilgrimage but, drawing on the Filipino's gambling mentality, they willingly undergo - many via illegal migration - the experience of economic exile to reap its many rewards. Like the ritual that gambling is, the economic journey is a rite of passage in which the labor migrant is neither here nor there, the individual's beingness somehow suspended until the status of a successful returned OCW is attained (Aguilar 1996: 114-115).

Another feature worth discussing is the "possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism" (Cohen 2008: 17), and consequently, the growth of overseas Filipino communities in host countries. While most of the discussion of permanent migration would go into the Filipino diaspora experience in the United States and the other traditional migrant receiving nations (Espiritu 2008, Pimentel 2008, Tiongson 2008, Rafael 2000), a growing number of literature discuss how Filipinos are settling in East Asia, particularly in Japan. As of 2011, there are already 154,219 permanent residents in Japan, making it one of the top destination countries among Filipino permanent migrants all over the world (CFO 2011b). In discussing the dynamics of settlement patterns and gender issues, various scholars have discussed how Filipino women are becoming more incorporated in their host communities all across Japan (Faier 2009, Takahata 2007, Suzuki 2003, 2000). Tigno meanwhile discusses how the Filipino identity is serialized and transferred across generations and communities through gatherings in Catholic churches and other hometown associations' activities (2008). Overall, these literature highlight the extent in which migrant groups are forming strong bonds of comradeship, and in the process negotiate the location of their homeland within their host communities outside of the formal boundaries of the Philippines.

This section shows that in the present period, horizontal bonds extend not only among migrants who share similar diasporic identity (e.g. as entertainers in Japan, construction workers in Saudi Arabia, domestic helpers in Hong Kong or nurses in the US), or migrants living in their overseas communities in various host countries, but

above all even Filipinos residing in the homeland itself. As such, even Filipinos in the Philippines have changed their views on what constitute the overseas Filipino community and a larger more encompassing Filipino nation.

**Summary of Deconstructing Anderson's Imagined Communities**

In summary by deconstructing Anderson, the framework shows that 1) imagined: it is not only Filipino identity and nationalism that is reimagined, but above all the Filipino nation itself is being reimagined, 2) limited: the diaspora experience has clearly shown that the nation is becoming more unlimited and inclusive in character and also deterritorialized in various dimensions, 3) sovereign: although the state still plays a big role in the Philippine diaspora, its position is now relatively weaker and not absolute. This shows not the primacy of the state, but rather the primacy of the diaspora communities itself, and lastly, 4) community: the nation as becoming an expansive community with strong horizontal bonds which are not based on state, but rather on the Filipino identity, Filipinoness and shared lived experiences.

### 1.3.4. Reimagining the Nation: The Diaspora Experience and the Emergence of a Global Filipino Nation

#### 1.3.4.1. Shared, Lived Diaspora experience as a New Basis of Nationalism

A major reason why Filipino nationalism and even Filipino identity is sometimes difficult to explain and understand is that unlike its other Southeast Asian neighbors, its pre-colonial past and civilization was not highlighted by its colonial masters. Hedman and Sidel explains that:

> This pattern of Spanish and American colonial disregard and dismissiveness of indigenous Philippine culture(s) stood in contrast with the well documented efforts towards the 'invention of tradition' pursued by other colonies of Southeast Asia… In all these cases, 'traditions' were invented, continuities conjured up, and (lost) civilizations celebrated. In the Philippines, by contrast, a deafening silence reigned: with no pre-colonial temple tablets to pour over, no native aristocrats to pamper and preoccupy, the colonial representation of 'civilisation' in the archipelago centred equivocally around the Catholic Church and a rather Hispanicised elite (Hedman and Sidel 2000: 143).

This shows that the basis of nationalism is not based on a pre-colonial identity nor a civilization/culture, but rather on the anti-colonial experience and in the later year,

towards a nationalist movement which was anti-dictatorial and anti-imperialist in character.

Expanding on this discussion, the authors then argue that in the present contemporary period, varied manifestation of a vibrant nationalist consciousness rely:

> Neither on notions of a recuperable pre-colonial past, nor on glorification of historical heroes, nor on an essentialised conception of an authentic *ur*-Filipino. Maintaining a healthy distance from the half-baked state-sponsored 'official nationalism' typified by the elementary school textbooks, the popular nationalism in evidence today draws on the shared lived experiences of millions of Filipinos as they have struggled, since the 1970s, in the face of dramatic economic, social and political change. Against the grain of arguments that Filipinos suffer from neo-colonial consciousness, a weak sense of national identity, and a 'damaged culture', Filipino nationalist consciousness and sentiment today is more vibrant, more inclusively gendered, and more politically promising than the official nationalisms promoted elsewhere in Southeast Asia (Hedman and Sidel 2000: 144).

While Hedman and Sidel already argue the primacy of shared lived experiences as the basis of a popular nationalism, this dissertation will focus and elaborate further on the role of Filipino diaspora experience, showing that it has led towards the reimagining of the nation and rethinking the basis of its nationalism. This thesis will show that the conceptual basis of the Filipino nation and Filipino nationalism has in fact already shifted from being state-centric with the homeland territorially bound, rather the basis of nationalism is based on the authenticity and practice of Filipinoness.

Many scholars and institutions have attempted to define Filipino identity and culture. In the academe, Filipino scholars from the Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC) initiated a critical reexamination of "Filipino values" during the 1960's and early 1970's.[11] While these conceptualizations presented a conservative view of Filipinos

[11] This obsession with Filipino values extends with the state's attempt to promote Filipino values for official nationalism and development purposes. During the Marcos era, values that are compatible with the *Bagong Lipunan* (New Society) were promoted; while during the Arroyo period, the president created a Presidential Commission on Values Formation (PCVF) through Executive Order no. 314 of 2004, to reevaluate "Filipino values" to promote a "Strong Republic" that is efficient, hard working and not corrupt. For example, Section 6 states that:

> The PCVF shall coordinate with and support non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector in the effort to eradicate from the government bureaucracy, every form or manner of graft and corruption, patronage politics, apathy, passivity, mendicancy, factionalism and lack of patriotism and to replace the same with honest public service and love of country (Executive Order 314: 2004).

being a 'smiling, peace-loving, religious, deferential, hard-working, family-bound and hospitable native' (Ileto 1979: 9), other scholars have drawn other conclusions. In his classic *Pasyon and Revolution*, Ileto linked Filipino values to a rich and long-standing tradition of peasant rebellion and popular religion (1979), while Rafael discusses how these values come from a "translation" and transfer of Iberian Catholicism (2006). Other than these historical methods, other Filipino scholars have begun writing on Filipino culture in the indigenous language while discussing Filipinoness through a popular and dominant approach called "*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*" (Philippine Psychology).

While the underlying theories on nationalism are being debated in academic circles, the everyday Filipino have a different understanding on what it means to be Filipino. Indeed, the growing popularity of pop cultural Filipino references seem to show that shared experiences rather than so called "Filipino values" or primordial historical grounds is the source of Filipinoness. Examples includes the 1995 magazine article "Are You Really a Filipino??? 115 Ways to Make Sure" and the book "You are Filipino if" by Romana-Cruz (1997) which highlights the quirks and seemingly unique if not trivial things that make a person truly Filipino.[12] Other than discussing the shared and popular features of Filipinoness according to a native, other popular writers and foreign journalists meanwhile discuss Filipino habits and idiosyncrasies through a foreigner's perspectives. This includes the well received "A Rhose, By Any Other Name" (Sutherland 1999) and Rafe Bartholomew's "Pacific Rims… the Philippines Unlikely Love Affair with Basketball" which explores Filipino culture through the country's obsession with basketball (2010).

The popularity of these articles and cultural tidbits, especially that a score of them are directed to the overseas Filipino *Balikbayan* communities and 2nd/3rd generation Filipino families living in the US and Canada; transcend traditional

[12]These include describing being Filipino by doing and being the following:
You point with your lips
You follow "Filipino time" and are consistently late
You own a *karaoke* system
You have a shrine of the *Santo Nino* (Baby Jesus) at your living room,
You have uncles and aunties named 'Baby', 'Girlie' and 'Boy'
(*Ang Tambuli* Newsletter, December 1995 as cited in Hedman and Sidel 2000: 148).

conceptions of Filipino values, identity and ethnicity as exclusively being tied to the homeland. As such, Hedman and Sidel shows that "the notion of Filipino-ness is decidedly open-ended, and that instead of a set of 'core values', Filipino identity is shown to revolve around a cluster of everyday practices" (2000:149).

Furthermore, Hedman and Sidel argue that the vibrant nationalist consciousness and sentiment in evidence today appear to have crystallized not around a strong attachment to 'The Philippines' as a geographic entity or a nation-state, but rather through the creative construction and self-conscious celebration of what it means to be Filipino, not in terms of some innate essence, but in terms of shared lived experiences (Hedman and Sidel 2000: 158).

In explaining this trend, Hedman and Sidel cite three socio-political trends since the 1970s as the main reasons why "shared lived experiences" has emerged and flourished. First is that the experience of Martial law and the failure of Marcos' official nationalism projects; second, fight against the "US-Marcos dictatorship" and the emergence of a radical "popular nationalism"[13], and third, after the failure of Marcos' official-state nationalism and the peak and subsidence of radical popular nationalism, it is the circulation of commodities, especially through national media and international flows of labor power which has continued to shape and enhance nationalist imaginings (2000: 160).

While Hedman and Sidel highlight that "the growing numbers of Filipino overseas contract workers (OCWs) have helped to promote a new kind of 'long-distance nationalism' that stretches beyond the map of the Philippine islands" (2000: 160), this dissertation will expound on this discussion and show that migrants are moving beyond the classic definition of long-distance nationalism, towards one that highlight the various forms of diaspora nationalisms.[14]

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[13] Sidel refers to a radical popular nationalism as a form of nationalism that is bottom up in origin and emerged as a response to dynastic and aristocratic forms of official nationalism (Anderson 2003: 110). While it is "popular" in the political science sense in that it opposes the state and power-elites, this does not refer to the everyday "popular" understandings of the common person.

[14] For further discussion on the definition and forms of long-distance nationalism, see Anderson (1998, 1992).

Furthermore, while Hedman and Sidel summarize that "the experience of anti-Marcos struggle in the 1980's, enjoyment of Philippine movies, television and pop music, and everyday struggles of Filipino OCWs have combined to provide a sociological basis – in both authorship and audience – for new modes of representing Filipinos and imagining a Philippine nation" (2000: 161), this research will expound and move beyond this discussion and will show that in fact, these new modes of representation and imagining have already led to the reimagining of the Philippine nation towards a deterritorialized and more inclusive Global Filipino nation.

Jumping off Hedman and Sidel's treatise on the sociological basis of representation and imagining, this dissertation will address the theoretical and conceptual gaps by first, focusing and emphasizing the larger role of Filipino diaspora experience and second, highlight the impact of the contending and melding of various diaspora nationalisms.

#### 1.3.4.2. Reimagining the Nation through the Diaspora Experience

Another scholar that has explored the effect of the diaspora experience in the reimagining of the nation is the work of Aguilar, particularly on his discussion on the emergence of the Philippines as a "transnation" and the dialectics of national shame brought about by the massive flows of labor migration, particularly in Asia (2004, 1996). While Hedman and Sidel discussed the impact of shared everyday lived experiences in the reimagining of the nation and as a new basis of nationalism and national identity, Aguilar focuses on how the Filipino nation was reimagined by its moving beyond the United States as the country's national Other, which about by the Filipino diaspora experience and movement of migrants to the United States, Asia and the rest of the world.

Similar to Hedman and Sidel's discussion, Aguilar starts off his discussion on the dilemma of Philippine nationalism, arguing that the predicament of Philippine nationalism was brought by colonial racism, weak state and the aborted serialization of national imagination, due to the county's attachment to the US as the national Other (1996: 105). Explaining on the importance of having the US as its national Other,

Aguilar expounds that due to the colonial experience of Spain's mismanagement of the country and with the US becoming the next colonial power; the Philippines has the distinction of having as its national Other the emerging and dominant super power, coinciding with its colonial independence after the Second World War. Looking into the US as its number one trading partner, and being one of the first overseas destinations among Filipino labor migrants, by and large, the Filipino national imagination for most of the present century was dominated by the United States (1996: 107), extending to the point that Filipinos have also hungered for the proverbial "American Dream".[15]

This attachment and focus on the US as the national Other continued well into the Marcos regime. With Marcos being one of the client authoritarian regimes that the US supported until his ousting after the 1986 EDSA revolution, civil society activists and the Filipino intelligencia have constantly discussed fighting against the "US-Marcos dictatorship" (Aguilar 1996: 108), which continued on until the present period by the ideological and political stances of a certain segment of Philippine civil society.

As the Marcos regime was getting weaker during the 1980s, it was Marcos' policy of labor manpower export that brought the Filipino migrant to other destinations, beyond the United States. Thus, as Filipino workers began to migrate to other parts of the world, the edifice of Philippine-U.S. binarism began to crumble. Aguilar explains that "the transnational linkages and communication sustained by Filipino migrants overseas with their kin and other social networks in the Philippines ensured that non-migrant Filipinos saw and heard enough if those other countries for them to imagine a plural world" (1996: 111). Further discussing the effect of the Philippine diaspora experience, Aguilar points out "the global dispersion of OCWs, both domestic service workers and professionals, has consequently buttressed nation-building, not so much in monetary terms, but in terms of resuscitation and fortification of the Filipino national imagination.

[15] Most Filipinos still consider the US as the primary migrant destination. Other than the initial flows of migrant labor to the US since the 1900s (Tiongson 2008), the mass migration of Filipino agricultural workers to Hawaii since the 1940s (Okamura 1998) and the massive flow of health care workers since the 1970s (Choi 2003) and the average Filipino still think of the "American Dream" (Pimentel 2008), leading even labor migrants in Asia to do "step-migration" (Tsujimoto 2010), first working in Asian destinations and then after several cycles, attempt to migrate to the US or other similar traditional migrant countries such as Canada, Australia or New Zealand.

No longer is the U.S. the sole Philippine Other" (1996: 111). After discussing the effect of the diaspora experience in how Filipinos imagine their own nation and their national Other, other scholars meanwhile discuss how the diaspora experience has not led to the reimagining of the Filipino nation as extending beyond its borders towards a Global Filipino nation.

#### 1.3.4.3. Emergence of the Global Filipino

The terms "Global Filipino" and "Global Filipino nation" have its origins as mass media and popular discourses which was promoted to reach out towards the Filipino diaspora. Although the nation is now seen as becoming borderless and deterritorrilized, it should be noted that it should not be seen as a cosmopolitan movement since the nation state is always its main basis, although its forms and interpretations have already changed. To analyze the emergence of a deterritorialized Global Filipino nation, various theories will be used to analyze this phenomenon. Although various theories and conceptualizations can be described as being part of the transnationalism tradition of migration theories, this dissertation follows the approach used by Vertovec's discussion of transnationalism theory (2009), and Faist's conceptualization of transnational social spaces as the middle transitory area (2000), which exhibit patterns that blur the distinction between host and home countries. Furthermore, in an attempt to show how older and more rational migration studies frameworks such as "methodological nationalism" have focused too heavily on the rigid borders of the nation state, this dissertation will use the new migration theory school of thought (Kleinschmidt 2007), as an approach to analyze and weave together the major themes of this dissertation.

#### 1.3.4.4. Contribution to Literature on Reimagining the Nation

In summary, Hedman and Sidel together with Aguilar have already initiated research that discuss the effect of the Philippine diaspora experience to the reimagining of the Philippine nation as a whole. Hedman and Sidel discuss how shared everyday lived experiences have become a new basis of Filipino nationalism and identity beyond the trappings of official nationalisms and academic discourses on Filipinoness. On a similar vain, Aguilar also discussed the reimagining of the nation, primarily through the realization that the United States is not the sole national Other of the country, but rather

the whole world in which various overseas Filipino communities are residing and settling as an effect of the diaspora experience.

While the authors have already discussed the effect of migration as one of the factors leading to the reimagining of the nation due to the congruence of shared everyday experiences and the movement beyond the United States as the sole national Other, this dissertation will jump off from their research and will more concentrate more thoroughly in theorizing the specific aspects of the Filipino diaspora experience in East Asia. Furthermore, while both scholars already discuss the reimagining of the Filipino nation through the diaspora experience, these authors have not discussed the specific role and emergence of diaspora nationalisms. As such, this dissertation will also contribute to the growing body of literature on the effect of the diaspora experience to the Philippine nation by thoroughly discussing and theorizing these aspects.

### 1.4. Analytical Framework and Methodology

After discussing the theoretical frameworks used by this dissertation, this section will explain the main analytical framework used to organize and present the data. For this study, the main substantive chapters of this dissertation (chapters four to six) will be organized in two main sections that highlight the main themes and argument of this study: the primacy of demotic nationalism and the reimagining of the Filipino nation.

**Table 1.1. Analytical Framework of Diaspora Nationalisms and Reimagining the Nation**

| |
|---|
| Theme 1: Primacy of Demotic Nationalism |
| 1.1. dynamics and contentions among diaspora nationalisms<br>1.2. primacy of the demotic nationalism |
| Theme 2: Reimagining the Filipino Nation |
| 2.1. reimagining the Filipino nation by the diaspora communities<br>2.2. reimagining the Filipino nation by the people in the homeland<br>2.3. reimagined nation - deconstructing Anderson's concept of imagined communities |

Source: Prepared by the author.

Addressing the first and second research questions, the first theme highlights the primacy of demotic nationalism, with the first sub-section showing the dynamics and contentions among the diaspora nationalisms. After exploring the differences of the conditions and practices of diaspora nationalism among Filipino diaspora communities in Hong Kong, Japan and in their home communities in the Philippines, the second sub-

section will show how that in further analysis, demotic nationalism has primacy in all of these case studies.

Meanwhile, in order to address the third research question, the second theme explains the process on how the reimagining of the Filipino nation is taking place. In particular, the first sub-section explains how the Filipino nation is being reimagined by the diaspora community in the host country, while the second sub-section explains how the Filipino nation is being reimagined by the diaspora community at the homeland itself, including the diaspora who have returned permanently, or their families and extended home communities left behind in their migrant journey. Lastly, the third sub-section analyzes the phenomenon of the reimagining of the Filipino nation by deconstructing Anderson's theory of imagined communities with its four main features of: imagined, limited, sovereign and community.

In discussing the methodology used by this dissertation, the main substantive data are taken from primary and secondary sources, through field work visits, in-depth interviews and participant observation. In particular, qualitative methods will be used to deconstruct the reimagining of the Filipino nation and to analyze the prevailing discourses promoted by the Philippine state, advocacy groups which highlight how migrants themselves understand and practice their own version of demotic nationalism.

Using this approach, this research will not work toward showing representativeness of migrant patterns and behavior, but rather will highlight the dynamics and contending interpretations of diaspora nationalisms between the state, advocacy groups and migrants themselves. Furthermore, the units of analysis will be among organizations and migrant groups rather than just migrant individuals.

### 1.5. Main Arguments

After discussing the main research questions and the theoretical framework to be used to analyze the phenomenon of diaspora nationalism in East Asia, this dissertation posits three main propositions which will be reviewed briefly in this chapter with a more in-depth discussion in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

### 1.5.1. First Proposition

> While the state and civil society groups attempts to reach out to the Filipino diaspora by promoting their own conceptualization of what constitutes the Filipino nation, Filipino identity and the specific role of migrants within their own national and state-building projects through discourses of official and alternative nationalist regimes, Filipino migrants themselves understand and practice a form of demotic nationalism. Although not necessarily in contention with the state and advocacy groups, migrants themselves have their own negotiated understandings of these contending nationalisms which are pragmatic and concerned with positive outcomes, rather than the normative and macro-level debates on migration and development between the state and civil society.

This dissertation theorizes the presence of contending diaspora nationalism as promoted by the state, advocacy groups and diaspora communities. Due to the contending and conflicting nature of these typologies, it would be natural to ask who "won" in the battle towards the hearts and minds of the Filipino diaspora. This dissertation shows through its case studies the primacy of demotic nationalism, one that is described as pragmatic and negotiated understanding of nationalism by migrants themselves. However in closer analysis, although demotic nationalism has primacy, no one social actor has "won" in these contending diaspora nationalisms. Rather, they all combine and lead to the reimagining of the Filipino nation as a whole.

### 1.5.2. Second Proposition

> The Filipino diaspora experience has led not just to the reimagining of the Filipino migrant as being part of a specific migrant identity or the larger Filipino diaspora, but above all the reimagining of the Filipino nation itself. This reimagining of the nation is brought about by the shared lived diaspora experience and the dynamics of the contending and melding diaspora nationalisms.

Other than theorizing the typologies of diaspora nationalism, the impact of the diaspora experience towards the reimagining of the Filipino nation is a truly unique phenomenon. Indeed, while much literature has already discussed the primacy or agency of migrants and to an extent, how migrants react to the calls for nationalism directed towards them, there has been no literature that focus on reimagining and changing conception of the homeland itself as brought about by the diaspora experience. This together with the typologies and the melding of diaspora nationalisms will be one of the original contributions of this dissertation.

### 1.5.3. Third Proposition

> The primacy of demotic nationalism, together with the shared lived diaspora experience has led to the reimagining of the nation as a being a Global Filipino nation. This reimagined nation is seen as being deterritorialized, "unlimited"/inclusive and having expansive community which is not centered on the Philippine state, but rather on the primacy of Filipino identity, Filipinoness and shared lived diaspora experiences.

As this dissertation will show in the succeeding case study chapters, the discourses and narratives of the *Balikbayan* and *Bagong Bayani* was used by the state to promote its own agenda and initiatives toward migrants. On the other hand, advocacy groups have also used these same discourses as a criticism to the state's labor migration policies and its lack of protection towards migrants. While both the state and advocacy groups through official and alternative nationalisms use the *Balikbayan* and *Bagong Bayani* to promote their agendas, the emergence of the Global Filipino is a symbol of the combined aspects of these previous discourses. Being cosmopolitan, deterritorialized and yet still Filipino nationalistic in character, the Global Filipino highlights how the sense of community is reimagined towards one that blurs the lines and extends towards deep horizontal ties among the Filipino diaspora in the region and in the world.

## 1.6. Structure of Chapters

Based on the research questions and theoretical framework, this dissertation will highlight the main arguments and how it addresses the literature gap through the following chapters:

After this introductory chapter, the second chapter will be the main literature review which also explains the logic behind the use of case studies in East Asia, particularly that of the Filipino diaspora communities in Hong Kong and Japan and the hometown communities in the Philippines. By highlighting the main trends and approaches on how Philippine migration studies in East Asia was conducted, this chapter will show the theoretical and substantive gaps on academic studies regarding nationalism and migration. Major themes to be discussed include long-distance nationalism, transnational shame and guilt, the typologies of diasporic identities and the need to focus on Filipino migration in East Asia.

The third chapter will explore in detail and theorize the typology of the diaspora nationalisms, highlighting their origin, main features and how these typologies of diaspora nationalism will be used to analyze the succeeding chapters. Afterwards, this chapter will then be discussing the role of migrant discourses and how they relate to the promotion of diaspora nationalisms and also the reimagining of the Filipino nation. One of the main features in which the contending diaspora nationalisms and the reimagination of the nation is discussed is through the development and promotion of the various migrant discourses. Through these migrant discourses, starting with the *Bagong Bayani* all the way to the Global Filipino, various themes and ideas are promoted by various social actors, such as the promise of migrant protection and diaspora development, the advent of a culture of migration in the Philippines, and the emergence and usage of the discourse of the Global Filipino. Using Baumann's approach for discourse analysis, this chapter will show how the dominant discourses by the state and civil society produce their own version of heroism and martyrdom to promote their own agenda and goals, while migrants themselves have their own forms of demotic discourses, interpreting and negotiate their own meanings and practice of what it means to be a migrant and part of the Filipino diaspora.

In the fourth chapter contending diaspora nationalisms between the Philippine state and migrant civil society movement in Hong Kong will be discussed. By analyzing the dynamics of these contending diaspora nationalisms and revisiting the old assumptions on the dominance of alternative nationalism in Hong Kong, this chapter

will show that new trends are emerging, showing how migrants themselves negotiate and practice their own form of demotic nationalism and its implications to the reimagining of the Filipino nation.

The fifth chapter will show the contending nature of the diaspora nationalisms as directed toward the Filipino community in Japan. Other than showing the dynamics and contentions of these diverging nationalisms, this chapter will clearly show the primacy of demotic nationalism, which is exhibited by the nature in which the official and alternative discourses directed towards them are negotiated and interpreted on their own terms, showing the pragmatic and demotic dimension of their nationalism. Furthermore, this chapter also argues that in light of the contending nationalism directed towards them; the Filipino community in Japan has begun to reimagine the Filipino nation itself. This chapter will show how even this reimagining has a demotic dimension, showing how their views on the reimagine nation also differs depending on the actor, on their specific perspective and worldview. More importantly, this reimagining will highlight how this reimagined Global Filipino nation is based on the Filipino identity and shared lived experiences, rather than a concrete and orthodox conception of the nation state that is bound by national borders, formal nationality and citizenship statuses.

The sixth chapter will then discuss the impact of migration and development initiatives by the state, advocacy groups and diaspora communities towards their home communities in the Philippines. By showing the literature gaps on studies on the initiatives of the state and advocacy groups on the migration and development nexus, this chapter will how migrants themselves have very pragmatic views on the impact of their migrant journey's towards their families and home communities, highlighting the primacy of pragmatic views and focus on maximizing positive outcomes, rather than the macro-national and meta-narrative debates on migration and development between the state and advocacy groups.

Lastly, chapter seven will attempt to weave together the major themes and data highlighted by the theoretical framework and the substantive chapters on the Filipino diaspora communities in East Asia. By discussing and reevaluating the Filipino diaspora

experience in East Asia, this research will show how the contending diaspora nationalisms and the changing features within the Filipino migrant communities in Asia has culminated into the reimagination of the Filipino nation, forcing not only the overseas diaspora community in Asia to rethink the scope and breadth of the Filipino nation, but above all, the peoples and communities in the homeland as well.

## Chapter Two
## Literature Review on Nationalism, Identity and Migration

After the introductory chapter, this chapter will be the main literature review which explains the main literature gaps in relating nationalism and identity with migration, and also the logic behind the use of case studies in East Asia, particularly that of the Filipino diaspora communities in Hong Kong and Japan and the hometown communities in the Philippines. By highlighting the main trends and approaches on how Philippine migration studies in East Asia was conducted, this chapter will show the theoretical and substantive gaps on academic studies regarding nationalism and migration. Major themes to be discussed include long-distance nationalism, transnational shame and guilt, the typologies of diasporic identities and the need to focus on Filipino migration in East Asia.

### 2.1. General Nationalism Theories and Schools of Thought

While attempting to analyze the impact of the Philippine migration on the changing conceptions of the Filipino nation and nationalism, it is important to establish the theoretical basis of the origins of nations and nationalism. In his discussion of the major theories of nationalism, Anthony Smith classifies the main paradigms on the origin of nations into five schools of thought, namely that of primordialism, perennialism, ethno-symbolism, modernism and post-modernism and other theories.

The first set of theories is classified as primordialism because it argues that nations and nationalism are derived from "primordial" attributes of basic social and cultural phenomena like language, religion, territory, and especially kinship. Furthermore, they believe that although nationalism as an ideology and movement might be recent and novel, nations are seen as forms of extended kinship and as such are ubiquitous. The second set of theories is referred to as perennialism, which views nations as recurrent in history, and views modern nations as deriving from fundamental ethnic ties, rather than from the process of modernization. The third type of theories is called ethno-symbolism, which aims to uncover the symbolic legacy of ethnic identities for particular nations. It also shows how modern nationalisms and nations rediscover and reinterpret the symbols, myths, memories, values and traditions of their ethno-

histories. The fourth type is called modernism, which views both nations and nationalisms from the novel processes of modernization. It aims to show how states, nations and nationalisms, and notably their elites, have mobilized and united populations in novel ways to cope with modern conditions and modern political imperatives. Lastly, the fifth school of thought is labelled as post-modernism, together with the other theories on nationalism. They argue that as contemporary national identities are being fragmented, new 'post-national' order of identity politics and global culture are emerging (Smith 1998: 223-224).

Explaining the theoretical debates on nationalism, Smith explains that the "old debate" during the 1950-60's was between the perennialists and the primordialists on one side, and the "classical modernists" on the other side. While perennialists/primordialists viewed the nation as persistent, with histories stretching back centuries, modernists regarded the nation as a product of wholly modern and recent conditions. For the first group, they view the nation as "rooted" in place and time and embedded in a historic homeland; the second group meanwhile sees the nation as a creation, consciously and deliberately "built" by its members (1998: 22-23). The new debate on the origin of nations meanwhile, is between more contemporary modernists and ethno-symbolists. This debate is discussed by Smith's essay entitled "The Nation: Invented, Imagined, Reconstructed" (2004).

Among modernists, it was Gellner who proposed that nations are constructed, arguing that nations and nationalisms are essentially a modern phenomenon. According to him, it was nationalism that engendered nations and it was only in the modern period that the "age of nationalism" did nations emerged (1983). Hobsbawm meanwhile also concurred with Gellner's definition of nationalism, but suggested that nations should be viewed as a dual phenomenon, one that sees it as being constructed from above, but incapable of being understood unless also understood from below (1990). Furthermore, he also introduced the concept of the invented tradition, which he defines as "a set or practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past". Some of the invented

traditions he cites include national flags and emblems, public ceremonies and monuments, ceremonies and semi-ritual practices like elections (1983: 1-14, 270-283).

Similar to Gellner and Hobsbawm, Anderson also views nationalism as a modern construct, but he sees it more as a product of "imagining" rather than of "invention". In his seminal work *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, he defines the nation as an "imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign". He goes on to explain that it is imagined because its members will never know, meet or hear most of their fellow-members (2003:15-16, 129). As a basis for this imagined community, Anderson traces the "cultural roots", which according to him has to be understood by aligning it not with "self-consciously held political ideologies", but with the larger cultural systems that preceded it. He then proceeds to mention the significance of "print-capitalism" and other cultural products in promoting nationalism.

As one of the premier scholars of ethno-symbolism, Smith claims that their standpoint is "intermediate" to that of perennialists and modernists. While he acknowledges that nationalism, both as an ideology and movement is a modern phenomenon, he asserts that the nation is historically embedded, one that incorporates several features of pre-modern ethnic and that a nation's "ethnic roots" (1986: 18). As such, he defines a nation as "a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members" (1991:14). An ethnie or ethnic community meanwhile is "a named human population with a myth of common ancestry, shared memories and cultural elements; a link with a historic territory or homeland; and a measure of solidarity" (1993: 28-29). While Anderson emphasized the role of modern cultural products in promoting nationalism, Smith and other ethno-symbolists stress the importance of pre-modern ethnic myths and symbols in forging cultural and social bonds and national attachments.

### 2.1.1. Literature Gap 1: Reimagining the Nation through the Diaspora Experience

As explained in detail in the theoretical framework section of chapter one, this dissertation uses as one of its main theoretical frameworks Benedict Anderson's

"Imagined Communities" (2003), which is from the modernist tradition. Similar to Anderson, both Gellner and Hobsbawm are also modernist, with Gellner viewing the nation as constructed (1983), while Hobsbawm views traditions that shape a nation as largely being invented (1990, 1983). While their views are different from each other, the common feature among themselves is their belief that nations are a modern phenomenon and as such, are imagined, invented and constructed in appropriate ways by the leaders and peoples of these nations. What this dissertation takes out from their interpretation however, is that if a nation can be imagined, invented or constructed; then it follows that a nation can also in turn be reimagined, reconstructed and reinvented.

Indeed, as discussed in the theoretical framework section in the previous chapter, the literature shows how a state, such as the Philippines under Marcos has attempted to reinvent various traditions and myths in order to promote his *Bagong Lipunan* (New Society) regime. However what these literature fail to explore is the specific role and effect of the Philippine diaspora experience in the reimagining of the Filipino nation. Although this was already discussed by Sidel and Hedman in their essay that shows how the migrant experience has had an impact on the growth of a "popular" form nationalism (year), this dissertation jumps off from their theorizing and aims to address of the main literature gaps on Philippine nationalism. After discussing the general schools of thought on nationalism theory and the literature gaps as it relates to the main theoretical framework of the dissertation, the next section will focus in particular on how nationalism relates to migration studies.

## 2.2. Nationalism and Migration

### 2.2.1. Emergence of Long-Distance Nationalism

Whenever authors consider the relation between nationalism and migration, the concept of long-distance nationalism is often discussed. As in any social science terminology, long-distance nationalism is defined in multiple ways and can mean many things for different people.

Benedict Anderson is one of the first scholars who initially discussed the emergent concept of long-distance nationalism. While he discussed the various facets

and prospects of what long-distance nationalism can bring forth, he nevertheless doesn't give an explicit definition. Rather he traces how distance has always been central to the concepts of nationalism, the nation-state and migration. In his essay entitled "Long-Distance Nationalism" (1998), Anderson describes how distance from one's hometown or home country evokes feelings of nostalgia and longing. He describes this moment of longing when Mary Rowland, an Englishwomen who was kidnapped by Native Americans within the territories of the 13 British colonies in America, encountered the cultivated fields of colonists while being moved by her captors. It was during her kidnapping that she saw those fields as being English fields, and through this process, attempted to distinguish herself and the cultivated spaces from the native peoples through her Englishness. This emotion and idea of Englishness was so strong for her in spite the fact that she was born in America and hasn't been to England herself.

The role of distance in evoking nationalist longing and emotions was also discussed when Anderson cited the famous aphorism by English politician-historian Lord Acton who stated that "exile is the nursery of nationality" (Anderson 1998: 59). Indeed the role of distance in shaping, maintaining and creating new nationalist movements are exemplified by the rise of Creole nationalism, which Anderson discussed in the case Latin American nationalist and in the Philippines, led mostly by the overseas-based students or political exiles. In explaining how these nationalists found a venue or medium to draw upon their nascent nationalist sentiment, he mentions the centrality of print capitalism, both during the late nineteenth-century and in its present hyper-connected world of globalization (2003, 1998).

Anderson then explains the dynamics and implications of long-distance nationalism by focusing on the political implications of exiled and overseas-based nationalist. Other examples of scholars working on the political aspects of long-distance nationalist includes Hau and Tejapira's *Travelling Nation-makers: Transnational Flows and Movements in the Making of Modern Southeast Asia* which explores the role of various East and Southeast Asian nationalist in shaping their nations, whether it be through independence nationalist movements or mass movements for radical or democratic change (2011).

While scholars such as Tejapira and Hau discuss the various aspects of long-distance nationalism in broad terms, a larger number of scholars discuss the often-negative implications of long-distance nationalism through secessionist and political movements against their home states. Indeed, Anderson initially focused on this aspect exclusively in his essay "New World Disorder" (1992b). In his essay, he focused mostly on the negative aspect of long-distance nationalism as a threat toward the nation-state and democracy, mainly by voicing his concern of the explosive use of long-distance nationalist through identity politics. He explains this by stating:

> "For while technically a citizen of the state in which he comfortably lives, but to which he may feel little attachment, he finds it tempting to play identity politics by participating (via propaganda, money, weapons, any way but voting) in the conflicts of his imagined *Heimat* - now only a fax-time away. But this citizenship less participation is inevitably non-responsible - our hero will not have to answer for, or pay the price of, the long-distance politics he undertakes. He is also easy prey for shrewd political manipulators in his *Heimat*" (1992b: 13).[16]

Reflecting a similar concern for identity politics of South Asian long-distance nationalist, Kapur describes the "Janus face of diasporas" when he focused on the negative effects from the flow of ideas and networks mainly through case studies of Indian, Sri Lankan and Pan-Islamic Diasporas (2007). Skrbis also discusses the experience of long-distance nationalist in Europe, arguing that long-distance nationalism develops only if an emigrant population contains a critical mass of political exiles (1999).

While Anderson portrays the negative aspects of long-distance nationalism, his views on this phenomenon changed as the years went by. While acknowledging the fear toward long-distance nationalist, he also recognizes its positive role and potential. Conjuring up images of the peaceful campaigns by political exiles and also those who are not political exiles, Anderson mentions the case where substantial numbers of Filipinos outside the Philippines who contributed, not from political exile, to the struggle against Marcos (1998:74). Indeed, this view that highlights the positive aspects of long-distance nationalism is largely shared and viewed by scholars as describing the Philippine diaspora experience.

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[16] Anderson uses the term *Heimat*, which is German for "nation". Similar to *Patria* (Spanish) and *Bayan* (Filipino), these terms are more nuanced than the English word "nation" since it can refer to multiple levels. Namely as a "nation", a province, a city or even in a town or village.

Similar to Anderson's focus on the positive potential of long-distance nationalists, various scholars have discussed the large role of overseas-based political exiles and activist for democratic restoration during the Marcos regime. Pimentel discussed how USA-based political exiles and activist during the Marcos regime campaigned endlessly to campaign for the US government to pressure the Marcos regime into moving toward genuine democracy and the end of political suppression in the homeland. This was exemplified when political activists, led by academic activist Walden Bello, stormed the Philippine consulate in New York and declared the freedom of the Philippine state from the Marcos dictatorship during the successful EDSA revolution of 1986 (Pimentel 2008).

While Pimentel discussed the role played by US-based activist in campaigning against the Marcos regime, Quimpo also discusses the experience of Europe-based activist, particularly since most of them where active members of the Philippine left (Quimpo 2008b). Quimpo relates the experiences of the central planning committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines - National Democratic Front (CPP-NDF) based in Utrecht, Netherlands. Other than planning and deciding on the strategies and ideologies to be pursued by the movement, the exiled Philippine left was active in coordinating with fellow socialist and left political parties in Europe and Asia. In his essay "Barrio Utrecht", Quimpo (2007) argues how the central committee was already moving towards less than democratic means and more into a top-down decision making model, which signaled the eventual shift and split which the Philippine left experienced in the early 1990's.

Other than the political interactions of exiled Filipinos in Europe, one of the major activities that they partook was the organizing of Filipino migrants in different parts of America, Europe and Asia. Indeed, these political actors through their establishment of various migrant advocacy NGOs offered support groups, gave important information and delivered social services toward migrants that the state couldn't even as Marcos ushered the policies of massive export of Filipino labor. While they initially offered these important services toward the migrant community, it was organized as part of the larger campaign strategy of linking several key sectors of

Philippine society under the Philippine Left's National Democratic (ND) mass movement, which includes farmers, fisher folk, indigenous peoples, urban labor, and the growing number of migrants.

While this mass movement has changed through the years as brought about by the ideological split of the Philippine left in the 1990's, the movement and campaigns of these activists still remain in the various NGOs which they organized since the 1980's which still live on as the most active of Philippine NGOs working for migrant rights. Some of these include the active role played by the Hong Kong migrant activist networks as initiated by Alcid in Hong Kong (Alcid 2006), the initial campaigns and organizing by advocacy networks in Japan which focused on gender issues, trafficking, abuse and later on, settlement issues, international marriages and the rights and recognition of Japanese-Filipino Children (JFC) (Takahata 2007, Ballescas 1993). While the movement was definitely political and has explicit aims of working toward reform or changing of the Philippine state under the Marcos dictatorship, its actions and services toward the migrants cannot be denied as having a positive impact for the lives of the Filipino migrant and their families.[17]

The previous section discussed the role of long-distance nationalism as a political force for good and its potential for disruptive politics and violent movements through identity politics. While long-distance nationalism lends itself to political dynamics and issues, its present-day usage mostly refers to a more non-political stance, which highlights the deterritorialized features and the transnational traits of migrants and diasporas.[18]

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[17] The dynamics of the contribution and impact of these overseas based Filipino activist still lives on and is reflected until now in the migrant advocacy communities and networks that exist in Asia, particularly in Hong Kong and Japan. This will be discussed further in the succeeding chapters, particularly in chapters four and five.

[18] Some of the pioneering scholars who mostly use sociological and anthropological approaches in discussing the growing transnational and deterritorialized nature of migration includes Basch etal (1994) in their pioneering study on transnationalism, and Schillers' framework of moving beyond methodological nationalism, which they define as the conceptual tendency to disregard the importance of nationalism for modern societies and taking for granted the boundaries of the nation-state and through this process, confines the study of social processes to the political and geographic boundaries of a particular nation-state (Wimmer and Schiller 2003: 577-578).

One key feature that is often discussed is the role of media in shaping long-distance nationalism, whether through print media, broadcast media and most recently, new media or social media. In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson mentioned the special role of print capitalism in fostering a common identity and national consciousness among the creole peoples in Latin America and Southeast Asia (2003). Jumping off from his discussion on print capitalisms, he explains the role of modern electronic media has become a more powerful influence than print, the original mother of nationalism. He emphasizes the role of electronic communications, together with huge migrations created by the present world-economic system bringing forth a virulent new form of (long-distance) nationalism, which no longer depends on the territorial location in a home country (2001: 42).

Much in the same way, various scholars have mentioned the role of media and its changing forms in shaping long-distance nationalism among the Filipino diaspora. Parrenas mentions the role of print media through magazines specifically targeting Filipino domestic helpers in forming a larger consciousness and work identity, that of a global Filipino domestic helper community, spanning Southern Europe and migrant destinations in East and Southeast Asia (2001b). While Parrenas specifically mentions the case of Filipino domestic workers, other scholars discuss the feeling of belongingness among the Filipino diaspora, as brought forth my ethnic media directed towards Filipino emigrants in the US and the succeeding generation of Filipino-Americans (Okamura 1998, Aguilar 2004, S. Quimpo 2005, Mendoza 2008). Expanding on the most novel form of media, Ignacio mentions the role of the Internet, new media and social media in creating a larger imagined community, specifically one that connects the Filipino diaspora to the homeland (2005).

Based on the anthropological and sociological approach of transnationalism theories, long-distance nationalism can then be defined in broader strokes and non-political in character. A good working definition is given by transnationalism scholar Nina Glick Schiller (2005), in which she defines it as:

> A set of identity claims and practices that connect people living in various geographical locations to a specific territory that they see as their ancestral home. Actions taken by long-distance nationalists on behalf of this reputed ancestral home may include voting, demonstrating, lobbying, contributing money, creating works of art, fighting, killing, and dying (570).

While the various scholars have defined long-distance nationalism based on various interpretations and approaches, this dissertation uses a broad definition of long-distance nationalism and synthesizes it into a new theorized concept as diaspora nationalism, which can be defined simply as how migrants understand and practice nationalism whether it be through political, cultural aspects, whether it be outwardly patriotic or even critical to the state. [19]

### 2.2.2. Literature Gap 2: Focus on how migrants understand, practice, and shape nationalism

This section discussed the relation of nationalism and migration by exploring the various works on long-distance nationalism, particularly those of various political actors in the Philippine context. By focusing on the activities of various long-distance nationalists, such as political exiles, activists and civil society actors, the literature has shown that long-distance nationalism has had a big impact in shaping the political conditions in the Philippines and also advocating for changes in migration policies. However what the literature has failed to focus on is the role of migrants and the Philippine diaspora as a whole in how they practice nationalism and above all, shape Philippine nationalism. Although the literature has clearly shown how civil society activists and NGOs have actively campaigned for migrants rights, and also how they attempted to shape the discourses and narratives of the diaspora experience, the literature nevertheless fails to discuss and focus on how the migrants themselves understand, practice and shape nationalism. This dissertation will explore and address this important gap by theorizing a unique typology of diaspora nationalism as will be discussed in the next chapter and substantive case studies in the succeeding chapters.

After discussing the literature gap on the lack of focus on how migrants understand, practice and shape nationalism, the next section will explore how migrants move beyond the nationalistic narratives directed towards them and its relation to the proposed theorizing on diaspora nationalism.

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[19] Although we have already discussed this concept briefly in chapter one, this concept will be theorized mainly in chapter three.

### 2.2.3. Of Guilt, Shame and Normative Debates on Migration

One of the key aspects of migration and nationalism in the Philippine context has to do with normative judgments on migration. Namely the judgement on whether the diaspora experience of the Filipino people was good or bad. This debate actually relates to a more concrete exploration on issues of patriotism and nationalist sentiment related to migration. A good example would be those questioning the patriotism of migrants, which asks: "Are migrants patriots or traitors whenever they choose to migrate"? Another major theme worth relates to the narrative of transnational guilt, as experienced by the Filipino migrant for leaving and abandoning the homeland; or the shame felt for migrants, due to their sad experiences and plight abroad.

Although many authors have discussed the themes above, this section will answer and summarize how these actors theorized them. After discussing their viewpoints, this section will analyze their main points and will show how they are related to the larger discussion of diaspora nationalisms, which this dissertation discusses in the succeeding sections and later chapters.

#### 2.2.3.1. Thematic Debate 1: Migrants as Patriots or Traitors?

When discussing the patriotism of migrant Filipinos, a common answer by opinion makers, political figures and some scholars is that it depends on the work type of the Filipino leaving for abroad. A common dichotomy states that permanent migrant leaving for the US, Australia and other traditional migrant receiving countries are seen as "traitors" who have turned their backs to the homeland, while those cyclical and temporary migrant workers meanwhile are seen as "heroes" since they sacrifice a lot for their family and country by sending their much needed remittances.

The prevalence of this dichotomy was best articulated by the essay of Rafael entitled "The Ugly Balikbayan and the Heroic OCWs" (2000). As one of the preeminent scholars of Philippine history and Philippine-American relations, Rafael explores the feelings towards the Filipino migrant with the advent of Marcos' labor export policies. This includes the sending of contractual migrants abroad, while at the same time, reaching out towards the permanent migrant who have settled in the US. In his essay, he describes how the *balikbayan* (émigré Filipino visitors) are "Ugly" (in reference to

the stereotypical “Ugly American”) because they constantly complain about the conditions in the hometown while doing so from a condescending position of someone who has achieved the American dream.

To sum it up, the negative normative view on permanent migration is often based on the following assumptions: 1) The *balikbayan* have turned their back to the homeland to pursue the "American dream"; 2) As they settle permanently and take root in their host societies, their ties to the homeland weaken and in the process, their remittances to the homeland decrease as families are reunited in their new host communities; and 3) The concern of brain drain, which is especially a cause for concern since a substantial portion of Filipino permanent migrants to the US are employed in the health sector.[20] This is especially true for nurses, which has been a major migration flow since the 1950's (Choi 2003).[21]

While *balikbayan* are considered ugly and unpatriotic, it is the contractual migrant workers who are often described as heroes. This narrative has been used since President Corazon Aquino on a speech welcoming domestic workers from Hong Kong to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) in Manila during the Christmas holidays proudly exclaimed that the nation is proud of their *Bagong Bayani* (modern-day heroes) and that it is very grateful for sacrifices - both for their families and in helping the nation through their remittances (Maglipon 1993). This narrative has even led to the renaming of Filipino migrant workers from being referred as Overseas Contract

[20] It has always been assumed that that as migrants become permanent settlers to their host countries, their rates of remittances decrease, compared to their undocumented and contractual migrant counterparts. While this may be true in classic cases of old world permanent settlers from Europe to the US in the twentieth century, the Filipino migration literature shows a different picture. Indeed scholars now highlight the importance of remittances by permanent migrants and their potential for philanthropic activities under the umbrella of diaspora philanthropy and migration and development paradigm (Castles 2009, Merz 2007). Furthermore in the case of the Philippines, permanent migrants from the US, Australia and even Japan have consistently shown that they send a higher amount of remittances comparable to their contractual OFW counterparts (ADB 2004).

[21] Although the flow of health care workers is one of the major trends in Filipino migration to the world in emerging and new labor destinations, healthcare work migration of nurses started as early as the 1950's as Philippine-trained nurses migrated to the US to compensate for the shortage of nurses in the US. This was discussed in detail in Choi's book, "Empire of Care" which traces the flow of Filipina nurses to the US and how it subsequently shaped the character of the Filipino community in the US (which is predominantly white collar and middle class) and the larger Philippine-US relations (2003).

Workers (OCWs) under Marcos, toward Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), which seemingly emphasizes their national identity and their role as *Bagong Bayani*. This narrative has been so ingrained in the Filipino national psyche that Rafael highlights the dichotomy between the Ugly Balikbayan and the Heroic OCWs (2000). This clearly shows that this dichotomy is not only promoted by the state but also accepted by the Filipinos in everyday social life.

### 2.2.3.2. Thematic Debate 2: What are the sentiments and feelings of the Filipino nation and its people brought by migrant experience?

**Transnational Shame**

This section will discuss the concept and narratives of transnational shame and guilt, which shows the theoretical and conceptual positions of the state and civil society, especially those related to how to promote and reach out to the Filipino migrant. After discussing the dichotomy of the ugly Balikbayan and the heroic OFWs, another narrative that often holds credence to Filipinos is the concept of transnational shame that the diaspora experience has supposedly brought to the nation. Indeed, many journalists and academics have focused on this theme. In her essay "The Yaya Sisterhood" Coronel narrates the story of a Danish couple residing in Australia, who while seeking a potential nanny, decided to post a notice in a Philippine-Australian internet message board catering to long-term Filipino residents in Australia.[22] Unexpectedly, the couple touched an emotional nerve and members of the message board quickly reacted to the notice. Reactions and comments include:

> "You are in the wrong forum! Don't you know that you are insulting people here in the forum? Judging by the posts here, I can assure you that these people are well educated."
> "Working as a maid does not equate to being uneducated. Most of our compatriots abroad working as nurses and nannies in Asia, Europe and the Middle East are highly educated. They are tertiary qualified graduates who are forced to leave as there are no jobs for them in the country. I guess that the connotation of a 'maid' as a second-class citizen remains in our psyche" (Coronel 2005:4).

As Coronel explains, this exchange provides us a window on how conflicted Filipinos are when it comes to overseas migration. "This ambivalence - on one hand,

[22] *Yaya* is the Filipino term used to refer to Filipino maids or nannies employed in the Philippines.

embarrassment, if not shame, at being known as a nation of nannies, and on the other hand, a grudging acceptance that the yaya sisterhood keeps families and indeed, the economy, back home alive – haunts Filipinos everywhere (2005: 4). Indeed, the term "Filipina" has become the geo-economic and political reflection of the domestic and gendered worker in various host countries. Filipina has come to mean a "maid" in Hong Kong, Singapore, Italy; a "nanny" in Canada, an "entertainer" in Japan and South Korea (Suzuki 2003, 2000). In Greece, an entry in a local dictionary defined "Filipineza" as a "domestic servant; someone who performs nonessential auxiliary tasks" (Ebron 2002).

With the socio-political reality and effect felt by the feminization of migration in Philippine social life, it is only natural that some have become quite sensitive to what the term "Filipina" comes to mean, both within and outside the country. Thus when reports came out that the Oxford English dictionary had described Filipino women as housemaids, the whole nation swung into action. Women's groups threatened mass protests, while then President Corazon Aquino promised a formal protest to the Oxford University Press. Although many actions were planned, it turns out that there was no reference to Filipina, offensive or otherwise. Indeed, this incident reflects the oversensitivity of Filipinos towards the overseas image of the nation that sends more than ten percent of its population to work and live abroad as migrants (Callo 1998).

The oversensitivity and consciousness on the Filipino image due to the socio-political dependence and the social costs attached to Philippine migration is understandable, nevertheless it is a good idea to explore who exactly are conscious of the national image and pride. Aguilar explored this in his essay "The Dialectics of Transnational Shame and National Identity" (1996). Aguilar explains that although the Filipino people are generally conscious of the national image of the Filipino migrant and consequently the Filipino nation, the opinion and consciousness regarding the Filipino nation and the migrant differs depending on the person who you talk with. Aguilar shows that while the working class and families with migrants view being a Filipino migrant as an honorable occupation and not problematic, it was actually the Filipino elite and middle class who had qualms about the labeling of Filipinos as domestic helpers or blue-collar workers. He mentions the case in which Filipino elite and middle class were conscious of being labeled or thought of as being migrants while they travel

abroad. Tellingly, he mentions the problem of some jet-setting Filipinos who while travelling abroad who took offense when, in meeting their migrant worker compatriots in the airport, were asked if they too were migrant workers.[23] Aguilar explains that "ultimately, the shame and embarrassment felt at the participation of Filipino men and women in the international labor market springs from the sense of a 'loss of face' for the nation as imagined by various elites" (1996: 126).

Although Aguilar shows that the elite are aware on the labeling of Filipinos as migrants, it does not necessarily follow that the average Filipino, nor the migrant worker are not conscious on the issue of transnational shame. Indeed migrant workers are very particular on how they behave themselves while working and travelling abroad. Aguilar states that migrants don't want to bring shame to the Filipino name and they are very saddened whenever a Filipino compatriot is caught in illegal acts and crimes while abroad.

If the Filipino elite and migrant workers both value the concept of transnational shame and bringing the good name and national of the Filipino people and the nation, where do they diverge in their perspectives? According to Aguilar this is shown when migrants themselves don't see anything wrong with their migrant experience. Indeed, they feel pride and accomplishment when they think about the fruits of their labor and for female migrants, the gender power and independence that migration has brought for them (Pabico 2005, Suzuki 2003). This shows that for migrants, pride in work and doing everything in accordance to laws (although they might be undocumented migrants themselves) is how they interpret national pride and manifest their identity as migrants. In closer inspection, migrants have a very pragmatic and instrumental view on migration. Indeed for them the source of national shame is not whether they are viewed as migrants working in their destination countries, but rather on whether they

[23] Reflecting the theme of the ugly *balikbayan*, there are stories and narratives that balikbayans or permanent migrants from the US, Australia and Canada views their contractual Filipino counterparts as being inferior. Indeed, the trajectory for chain migration and the ultimate need for Filipinos to chase the American dream shows the underbelly of the pecking order of the Filipino diaspora: with the *Balikbayan* from the US at the top, followed by permanent migrants who have settled in other emigrant destinations in Canada, New Zealand and Australia, followed then by contractual migrant workers and seafarers, and lastly their tragic brethren, the undocumented workers.

come home empty handed and not their migrant outcomes not bringing forth the material rewards that their families and communities in their hometowns associates is the proper outcome of migrants. In summary, the concern of the real Filipino OFW is not on transnational shame but rather on the often fatalistic view of whether they come home as *panalo* and not *talo* (winner vs. loser).[24]

**Transnational Guilt and Brain Drain**

Similar to the previous section that highlights the role of social class in shaping the opinion on the national shame brought by migration and the changing views on national identity, the issue of transnational guilt is also an important aspect that needs to be discussed through a social class lens. The narrative of transnational guilt borne by migration started in the 1990s especially as the impact of migration was beginning to be felt, not merely by the migrants themselves, but rather the children of these first-generation contractual migrants, who were raised experiencing the impact and effect of migration first hand.

This generation of Filipino children and youth experienced the feminization of migration and its effect toward children left-behind (Asis 2004a, 2004b, Dizon-Anuevo 2002), the impact of brain drain especially in the healthcare sector (Choi 2003) and the emergence of the culture of migration (Asis 2006b) leading not only to the dependence to labor migration but the acceptance and positive outlook on the migrant journey (San Jose 2005). Indeed, it is this generation of Filipinos who were the first ones to have recognized the inherent contradictions of migration. This generation were socialized into thinking that travelling abroad is a necessary evil that leads to the underdevelopment of the nation due to the loss of talent through brain drain. On the other hand, this is also the same generation that has seen the benefits of migration into their households, bringing a new consumer culture and a larger dream for opportunities and freedoms abroad. It doesn't help that options for tertiary education are heavily dependent on foreign labor market demands, with undergraduate courses and

[24] This concept was discussed by Ballescas on her pioneering study on Filipina entertainers in Japan, which also asks why do these migrants continue to migrate to Japan although they were aware of the risks involved in the entertainment industry in Japan (1992). This concept of *Talo* vs. *Panalo* will be explored in detail together with the concept on migration and development in chapter six.

specializations geared towards the demands of the global labor markets. This was reflected on the heavy emphasis on engineering courses for men toward overseas employment to the Middle East, seafaring courses for potential global seafarers, and the very specific niche market of international healthcare workers, i.e. nurses toward the US and nursing and caregiving jobs to new labor destinations in Canada, Europe and now Japan (Ballescas 2007, Choi 2003).

As such, it is in this context that the choice of migrating abroad is a constant source of tension especially for the idealistic Filipino youth. This is reflected in Ong and Cabanes study on Filipino scholars and researchers in England which they refer to as "elite migrants" (2011). They argue that since these scholars were neither permanent migrants (e.g. nurses) nor contractual workers or OFWs, they feel the pressure to return or have an idealistic desire to return home and serve the country (2011). Comparing the discourse of elite migrants with the *Balikbayans* and *Bagong Bayani*, they explain that:

> Unlike the *balikbayans* who have settled permanently in host countries, migrant Filipino scholars still seem eager to consider the clamor for them to return and be heroes for the homeland. Unlike many migrant workers, they have a chance to attain a life of comfort and security in their host country, to become *balikbayans*. Because of these contradictory obligations and opportunities, it is not as easy to discern the kind of public connection that these elite migrants have (Ong and Canabes 2011:205).

This dichotomy and tension of the so-called transnational guilt on migration and the negative effects of brain drain are highlighted in the video speech by the retired economist and social critic Prof. Winnie Monsod, wherein she admonishes her students not to forget the duties of a University of the Philippines (UP) student. In her speech, she argues that as a state-funded scholar, a UP student should serve the country and not to be lured by the quick economic promises of migrating abroad:

> 'If you are going to help this country, you've got to be in the country. If any of you have little ambitions of going abroad so that you can earn more, please disabuse yourself, because by doing that you are essentially betraying the people in the Philippines who trusted you and who invested their money in you.' (Lapeña, 2010).

When her speech was uploaded to YouTube, many Filipino social commenters and internet citizens quickly reacted, especially overseas Filipinos and *Balikbayans* who had settled abroad or changed their nationalities, explaining that they are working

abroad out of necessity and also emphasizing the economic benefits of their remittances:

> 'How am I a traitor when the dollars I earn here translate into businesses and consumer confidence and local spending by the family and people I still support back home? How is it that I am a fool when I have wrought only respect and admiration and love in [the USA] for a Filipino?'
> 'As an OFW, I cannot allow this one opinion of hers to render useless my choices in life . . . I have to be away from my kid while I do my bit in helping keep the Philippine economy out of the red.' (Ong & Cabanes 2011: 201)

Perhaps Benjamin Pimentel, a Filipino journalist and social activist who is a naturalized American citizen, wrote one of the better rebuttals. Writing in defense of his fellow Balikbayans and in particular, his fellow UP alumni; he argues that *Balikbayans* can still help the country through diaspora philanthropy projects (2010).

While this debate has its merits, today's youth seem to have a new take on issue. Although the concept of transnational guilt is still a big issue, it seems that the norms on transnational guilt of migration has slowly changed. Indeed, the youth today seem to view that migration, whether temporarily or permanent is also a conscious decision that also can be viewed in a pragmatic light. Viewing that migration can also lead to development of the home country through remittances, diaspora philanthropy and even brain circulation.

Indeed, for the present generation, they are increasingly view migration as a rational choice with much positive potential. Although this could also stem from the changing views on migration and development (which will be described in detail in chapter six), one could also argue that the emergence of a "culture of migration" seemed to have broken the shackle of transnational guilt.

In discussing the dynamics of nationalism and migration, this section clearly shows that normative values related to the political and economic aspects of migration are highly subjective and depends to whom the issues are raised to. For scholars discussing the political aspects of migration and overseas-based political movements, they mostly view their long-distance nationalist activities as a positive force. For scholars and social commentators discussing the broader economic and normative aspect of labor migration, the literature shows that whenever migration was viewed

with a nationalist lens, some of the scholars such as Rafael (2000) and San Juan (2006) traditionally viewed labor emigration, especially by the skilled and middle class youth as being unpatriotic. However, with the growth of a "culture of migration", Philippine society is gradually viewing labor migration as a rational choice which can contribute to the homeland, not merely by remittances but rather other more expansive activities such as diaspora philanthropy, brain circulation and even the heroic return of the "elite migrant", *Balikbayan* and *Bagong Bayani*.

### 2.2.4. Literature Gap 3: Moving Beyond Narratives of Shame and Guilt

As shown in this section, the main normative debates regarding migration in the Philippines center on whether diaspora experience is problematic and brings transnational shame to the nation and as a corollary, whether the decision to migrate, especially for permanent migration, is an unpatriotic act that brings transnational guilt to the migrants. Indeed, while the literature has shown the role of the state and civil society in promoting their positions regarding the debate, the main literature gap shows that not much has been written on how the migrants themselves view and understand their roles and how they position themselves in these normative discussions. Indeed, this dissertation will address this literature gap by focusing on the migrants themselves. This dissertation will show that these narratives and discourses are being promoted by the state and advocacy groups to reach out towards migrants and in order to shape their opinions regarding migration and to promote their own interests. Above all this dissertation will show in the next chapter on diaspora nationalisms that the migrants have in fact gone past these narratives of shame and guilt, and have formed their own understanding and practice of diaspora nationalism beyond those promoted by the state and advocacy groups.

## 2.3. National Identity and Migration

In reading the academic literature that discuss the dynamics between nation, nationalism and migration, most scholars focus on the formation and understanding of national identity or rather, the specific identities ascribed to migrants and their membership to a larger Filipino diaspora. While their focus is interesting, this set of literature does not discuss how the diaspora experience as a whole has affected the imagining of the nation.

This section will show how scholars mostly discuss the formation and understanding of Filipino nationalism by the Filipino diaspora, mainly through a diasporic identity lens. This is reflected mainly through their use of various typologies to define diaspora identity, such as the Filipino seafarer, global domestic helpers, the *Japayuki* and *Filipina Hanayome* to name a few. Furthermore, this section will also show how these specific diaspora identities are often based on social class, job types and their countries of destination; in particular reflecting how the Filipino diaspora is not homogenous, with these migrants reflecting multiple and multi-level identities.

### 2.3.1. Typologies of Diasporic Identities

Whenever diasporic identities among the Filipino diaspora are being discussed, the concept and discourse of the *Bagong Bayani, Balikbayan* and Global Filipino are frequently mentioned. Since they are the main diasporic identities, which have had a big impact in shaping both the political economy of Filipino migration and the creation of a culture of migration, this will be discussed in detail in chapter three of this dissertation. For this section, we will be discussing some other typologies of diasporic identities, as seen through specific themes of gender, and the specificity of second/third generation Filipinos, also known as Filipino-foreigners.

#### 2.3.1.1. Filipino Diaspora and Gender

One of the phenomenon brought by the intensification of migration as "manpower export" under the Marcos regime and succeeding presidential administrations was the feminization of migration (Asis 2004b). While initially it was male contractual laborers working in the construction industries in the Middle East during the 1970's that started the policy of labor export, the opening of new labor markets in Asia and some parts of Europe in the 1980's started the larger trend of women migrant laborer surpassing their male counterparts. Working in the reproductive and affective sphere of labor, these women were employed as domestic workers, entertainers and were also becoming mail-order brides in Asia and other parts of the world.

While the experience of every migrant differs greatly depending on the type of work, contractual obligations, and employers, it is natural that these migrants form common bonds and means of representing themselves even if they were assigned in far-off and disparate labor destinations. One such example is the forging of a global community and identity of domestic helpers. One of the leading experts in Filipino overseas domestic work, Parrenas frequently discusses the experiences of Filipina domestic helpers in Hong Kong, Singapore and Southern Europe (2001a, 2001b). One of her studies in particular focuses on the creation of an imagined global community of domestic helpers. In her study exploring the partial citizenship and the "imagined (global) community" of migrant Filipina domestic helpers, she discusses the role of print media, in particular of a magazine called "*Tinig Filipino*" (Filipino Voice) that catered to domestic helpers and other migrants working in Hong Kong, Singapore and parts of Southern Europe. Jumping off from Anderson's work that explores the role of print-capitalism in creating an imagined community that transcend geographical boundaries (2001b), Parrenas shows how *Tinig Filipino* was able to forge a common identity among these migrants, mainly through the manner in which the magazine was created and published. She explains that: "the distribution of *Tinig Filipino* in at least a dozen countries around the world signifies the presence of a diasporic community from which these magazines profit, and which in turn is perpetuated by their circulation of information (to say the least) across geographic borders. As print language created the "imagined community" of the nation in the 1800s, it now provides a tangible link connecting migrant Filipina domestic workers in the formation of an imagined global community" (2001b: 1144). Furthermore, while ethnic media such as newspapers and magazines are common in communities with a high number of labor migrants, *Tinig Filipino* differentiates itself from other ethnic media in that the contributors are domestic workers, writing and sharing their experiences with fellow domestic workers.

Another segment of feminized labor is the emergence of the entertainer and marriage migrants, particularly those destined to Japan (Suzuki 2003, Ballescas 1992) and later on in South Korea (Yea 2006).[25] While many of these studies focused on the

[25] The terms of "marriage migration" and a "marriage migrant" are modern academic terms used to refer to the flows and movement of persons for marriage. This encompassing term attemps to remove the stigma from the more problematic and negative meanings attached to

history, labor conditions and their gradual settlement to Japan, a crucial element that binds the literature is the specific role of narratives and terms to describe these entertainers and foreign spouses. In Japan, these entertainers are called *Japayuki*, while the foreign spouses are called *(Filipina) Hanayome.*[26] While these terms have been discussed in the literature, a common way of discussing these terms are the effects of these terms in shaping their identity as migrants, both ascribed to them by others and self-identification, and the role of shaping larger narratives of race and gender.

While most literature on gender and migration have focused on the feminization of migration, another subset of studies focuses on male migrants through a gender lens. As one of the pioneer labor migrants, Filipino contract workers to the Saudi Arabia have much been researched. As Dumia (2009) and Aguilar (1996) show, these migrants face a lot of hardships in their host societies. Other than the adjustment to religious and cultural differences of the host country, these migrants are very particular on how they present themselves. Aguilar mentions the case wherein a Filipino was said to have been caught of doing a crime and was sentenced to death. Feeling ashamed that one of their compatriots committed a crime and brought a bad name to the Filipino nation, the OFWs were said to have been relieved when they learned that the criminal was of another nationality (1996). This shows the common identity and bonds among migrants that such stressful labor environment entails.

Another group that is well researched on is the seafarers. In her study following a merchant crew with a Filipino captain and an international crew with Filipinos, Swift (2011) discusses how these Filipinos shared a common bond and considered themselves literally and figuratively "as being in the same boat", and by likening themselves a being part of a *barkada*, a term of in-group togetherness which harkens to the Filipino pre-colonial identity as a seafaring nation. Swift also highlight how the Filipinos extensive presence at sea makes the ship an important site of mediation in which diasporic Filipino identities are shaped (2011: 274).

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trafficking and mail-order brides. Thus, this more neutral and nuanced term includes various situations such as mail-order brides, persons who migrate after their marriage with international spouses, marriages through church-related couple introductions, etc. For a more detailed discussion, see Yang and Lu (2010).

[26] The origin of these words and their attached meanings and narratives, will be discussed in detail in chapter five.

In the previous section, we discussed the identity of the Filipina entertainers as *Japayuki*. While Suzuki herself has written many studies on the *Japayuki* and *Hanayome* (2003, 2002, 2000), she also explored another group of Filipino migrants, this time as Filipino male boxers in Japan (2007). Tracing how the Philippines and Japan had similar interests in boxing, Suzuki explores the world of Filipino boxers who migrate to Japan in order to fight Japanese boxers, not to compete, but rather to prepare them for their bigger matches and boost their confidence. Her study takes this very masculine sport and analyzes it through a gendered lens. She argues that through the economic disparity between Japan and the Philippines, these Filipino boxers who migrate and 'compete' in Japan are 'feminized' through the process of putting them in lower social and gender positions.

What these diasporic identities show us is that in spite of their different contexts, situations and social positions are, they are often in reaction to, or ascribed statuses as subjugated positions. This clearly shows that the concept of national shame is closely linked to how these migrants present and portray and reflect themselves as Filipinos in their various host destinations.

#### 2.3.1.2. Second and Third Generation Filipinos and the Homeland

**Filipino-Americans**

One of the assumptions regarding long-distance nationalism is that this is mostly limited to the first generation migrants since they were born and raised in the homeland, while the next generation have only the collective and family memories of their parents. While this maybe true second or third generation Filipinos, how they understand and express their diasporic identity and heritage differs in the social context, and ethnic relations of their adopted nation.

A good case in point is the case of second and third generation Filipinos in the US, which are commonly referred to as Filipino-Americans or colloquially as *Fil-Am, Am-boy, Am-girl* for short. Exploring the Filipino-American community in Hawaii, while using a diaspora studies framework, Okamura argues that the Filipino-American

community sees itself as part of the Filipino diaspora and as such, a larger global Filipino community (1998). Similar to Okamura's study, other authors highlight how the Filipino-American youth are beginning to identify themselves as Filipino and as such, have a curiosity on their roots. Susan Quimpo shares the experience of the *balik-aral* (study trip) program that helps the Filipino-American youth learn about their roots by organizing various study tours and social immersion activities in the homeland (2005). Other than S. Quimpo's group, the Commission for Overseas Filipinos (CFO), a government agency tasked with reaching out toward Filipinos who have already emigrated to other countries through socio-cultural activities and diaspora philanthropy, also has a similar *balik-aral* project (CFO 2011). Similar to S. Quimpo, Mendoza (2008) also explores how some of these Filipino-Americans travel to the homeland in search of their roots, bringing a new ethnical awareness to themselves and through this process, express new forms of activism and long-distance nationalism through political rallies and protest on the current social issues facing the Philippines and Filipino-American relations.

While these programs have had some success, as evidenced by the growing number of exchange participants and also the seeming growth of political and national awareness of these Filipino-American youth, this manifestation does not necessarily mean that they are long-distance nationalist. In his essay entitled "Is there a Transnation?", Aguilar explores the practice and understanding of nationalism by the Filipino diaspora (2004). In this study, he also discusses the activism and political awareness of these second-generation Filipino-American youth. While they overtly express a curiosity and genuine interest to the homeland, Aguilar argues that these activities are not manifestation of a newly found long-distance nationalism toward the homeland. Rather, he explains that their motivation to learn about the homeland is based on the larger and more latent need to fit in American society. Through the process of learning about their ethnic and cultural roots, Aguilar shows they are able to be integrated to the larger American society which values multiculturalism.

**Filipino-Japanese**

While both the Filipino-Americans and Filipino-Japanese are both 2nd or 3rd generation migrants, their social context of their immigration policies shape how both

form and understand their diaspora identity. While it is natural for the 2nd or 3rd generation children to show an initial interest to the Philippines, through their occasional visits with their parents to the homeland, how these 2nd generation migrants manifest and express their ties to the homeland differs greatly. As Aguilar (2004) has mentioned, Filipino-Americans outwardly seek their diaspora roots and through this process create conditions in order for them integrate better to the larger US society, the dynamics and outlook for those in Japan and outlook are markedly different from their Filipino-American counterparts. Studies ranging from those studying language acquisition to international marriages between Filipinos and Japanese household show that the Filipino-Japanese seems less more inclined to learn about their ethnic roots and express their ethnicity to their Japanese peers (Suzuki 2010, Le May 2011).

Although the feeling of cultural alienation and a lack of acceptance in their homeland plays a role, the studies seem to suggest that they do so in order as not to stick out and be socially distinct from their Japanese peers. This outlook reflects not merely the stereotype of Japanese children (and those international children socialized as Japanese) not wanting to stick out, but also reflects the reality that in spite of Japan's thrust to become more international and multicultural (Akashi 2010, Kondo 2008), to a large extent Japan is still an assimilationist country, especially to the 2nd-3rd generation children of migrants or those from international marriages. While some trends and social commenters seem to have a more optimistic outlook on the gradual change in Japan towards its embrace as a multicultural society (San Jose 2010, Sakanaka 2007), there is still a distinct assimilationist thrust in Japanese society.

Other than the difference of the context and outlook towards their homeland and their adopted country between Filipino-Americans and Filipino-Japanese, it is also important to look deeper into the differences and typologies within the 2nd-3rd generation Filipino-Japanese. One way to refer to these 2nd-3rd generation are as Filipino-Japanese, signifying that the children have Filipino ethnicity but have Japanese nationality by virtue of being from an international marriage. These hyphenated Japanese are often called *ha-fu* (half).[27] On the other hand the term Japanese-Filipino

[27] Similar to the use of *mestizo* in the Philippines, the Japanese use the term *ha-fu* to refer to children of mixed parentage. While the term is widely used and accepted, various people

Children or JFC refer mainly to those children who are also of mixed parentage but were not borne out of wedlock or were not recognized by their Japanese fathers. Furthermore since these JFC are often raised in the Philippines without knowing their biological fathers, they are raised culturally as Filipinos but are still seeking Japanese citizenship recognition, both for emotional and also pragmatic reasons.[28]

### 2.3.2. Literature Gap 4: Reimagining National Identity through the Diaspora Experience

In exploring the impact of migration on the formation of migrant identity, national identity and nationalism, most of the literature has focused on either how their identity is understood and adopted by migrants and the succeeding ethnic generations or how diasporic identities by specific migrant groups are defined by their work type, labor destination or social classes. Indeed, while these concepts and identities are well researched and discussed, it has always focused on the identities of migrants vis-a-vis their specific migrant experiences. This shows that there is a literature gap on migration and nationalism studies that focus on how the Filipino people have changed their views and perceptions on what constitutes a "genuine" Filipino national identity. This dissertation will address this literature gap by showing that in fact, the various diaspora identities expressed by Filipino migrants exhibit the emergence of multiple and multi-level diasporic identities. This shows the various interpretations of Filipino national identity is becoming more inclusive and heterogeneous. This multiplicity of diasporic identities will be explored and theorized further in chapter three, particularly in the discussion on the emergence of the narrative and discourse of the Global Filipino. The next chapter will show how the conception of the nation, national identity and nationalism has already changed through the diaspora experience in East Asia.

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view the term as value-laden, due to the fact that being a *ha-fu* signifies that they are only half and not pure "Japanese" although culturally they were socialized as pure Japanese. As such, some scholars and writers are suggesting other terms that might be more neutral or positive in outlook. Ventura, a journalist and writer who is long-time Filipino resident and married to a Japanese spouse suggests that their children are not ha-fu but rather are "double", since they have both the wonderful cultures and heritage of their parents (2007).

[28] The differences of terms, narratives and social issues regarding these 2nd generation Filipino-Japanese children will be discussed in depth at chapter five.

## 2.4. Nationalism among the Filipino Diaspora in East Asia

Similar to the previous section, most of the literature focusing on Philippine labor migration to East Asia has focused on studies related to the context and issues of migrants in their destination countries, the concept of the "victimhood" and agency of migrants. In studies focusing on area destinations, much literature has focused on the specific destinations of migrants, such as the pioneering research in Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Middle East, etc. On a related note, the focus of studies have also been divided according to the specific work type of the migrant, such as the domestic worker (Parrenas 2001b), entertainers (Ballescas 1992), mail-order bride (Suzuki 2003), and international health workers (Ballescas 2009a, 2009b).

While these studies have been exhaustive and are up to date on the latest issues faced by these migrants, there has been no overarching macro theory or theoretical framework that has attempted to combine these specific studies on Filipino migrants in East Asia into a cohesive body of theory. The closest approach that seems to combine these studies based on these East Asian destinations is the thematic discussion on the victimhood and agency of the Filipino migrant in East Asia. Indeed, while these studies are important, they have always been focused on the victimhood and vulnerabilities of these migrants on one hand, and on the side, focused on the "agency" of these migrants as they fight for their migrant rights and support each other in their respective adopted host communities. While the focus on migrant agency are important, a closer analysis will show that the agency of these migrants refer to how migrants are able to help each other, mostly through the support of various civil society organizations or through good migration policies. As such, there is a literature gap highlighting the agency of migrants in how they specifically understand and practice their diaspora nationalism.

### 2.4.1. Literature Gap 5: Theorizing the Filipino Diaspora Experience in East Asia

Furthermore, the literature gap on the lack of research exploring the agency of migrants in East Asia reiterates how there is not much theorization on migration studies among the Filipino diaspora in East Asia, unlike for example with the much theorized and discussed migrant experience of the Filipino-American community. Indeed the literature on the Filipino-American community has been much researched with multiple themes and theoretical discussions on how Filipinos adopt to US society

(Tiongson 2008), role of Filipino-Americans in maintaining transnational ties to the homeland through Balikbayan visits and diaspora philanthropy (Opiniano 2005), the US as the primary national other of the Filipino migrant (Aguilar 1996), the role of the Filipino migration to the US vis-a-vis through an anti US imperialism framework (Choi 2003, Rafael 2000, Rodriguez 2002) and the practice of Long distance nationalism by exiles and activists during and after the Marcos regime (Quimpo 2008b, Pimentel 2008).

As such, this dissertation will address the literature gap on Filipino diaspora studies focusing in East Asia by exploring not only how migrants exhibit agency through their understanding and practice of national identity and nationalism, but above all, attempting to create a larger theoretical framework to analyze the Filipino diaspora experience in East Asia through a diaspora nationalism lens and framework.

### 2.5. Summary

In summary, this chapter showed the main literature gaps and proposed approach that this dissertation used it order to address them. Through this process, this dissertation will answer the main research questions by addressing the gaps on: 1) how the concept of the Filipino nation has been reimagined and contested, 2) how migrants themselves understand and practice their nationalism, and 3) how the Filipino diaspora experience as a whole shaped the reimagining of the nation, Philippine nationalism and national identity.

The literature review with its sub-sections on nationalism theory, long-distance nationalism, diasporic identities and the Filipino diaspora communities in East Asia was discussed in order to properly highlight the literature gaps and set the next chapter's theorizing on diaspora nationalisms. Through the discussion on general migration theories, this chapter introduces the logic that if a nation can be constructed, invented or imagined, then it follows that it can also be reconstructed, reinvented or reimagined. By deconstructing Anderson's theory on imagined communities, this sections showed that although many literature have discussed how nations can be reimagined to fit the needs of the state or its elite, these is a literature gap on studies that describe the effect of the diaspora experience in shaping how the Filipino nation is being reimagined by the Filipino diaspora.

After discussing the general migration theories, the next section was devoted to reviewing the literature on migration and nationalism. This section showed that although the concept of long-distance nationalism has already been discussed and theorized in various case studies, both in the Philippine context and in other regions of the world, most of the literature focused on the political dimension which is centered on political actors: namely that of political exiles, long-distance nationalists and advocacy groups. As such, this dissertation expresses the need to refocus back to the migrants, and analyze how they themselves practice and understand nationalism directed towards them.

One of the main driving forces in the state and advocacy groups' attempt to promote their political agendas toward the migrants is the promotion of the narratives of transnational shame and guilt. By highlighting these narratives, these groups attempt to promote their positions in the normative debates regarding migration within the larger Philippine society. While the literature has discussed in depth how the state and advocacy groups promote their various positions, the main literature gap in such studies is the lack of focus on the migrants themselves. By highlighting this literature gap, this section has shown the need to further theorize diaspora nationalisms and argues that migrants have gone past these narratives and are actively negotiating and practicing their own version of diaspora nationalism.

After discussing the relationship between nationalism and migration, the chapter explored the relation between national identity and migration. While the literature has discussed heavily on the various diasporic identities of various Filipino migrants across the world, this subsection highlighted the literature gap in specific academic studies that focus on how the diaspora experience has it fact changed how the nation and the Filipino people views and understand Filipino national identity. Indeed, the subsection shows that Philippine national identity has become more expansive, inclusive and heterogeneous.

Lastly, this chapter ends by highlighting the literature gap on studies focusing on the Filipino diaspora in East Asia. While much literature had been devoted to studies on

specific diaspora groups and labor migration policies and conditions in the various host societies in East Asia, there is a literature gap since there has not been much theorizing, nor was there a larger theoretical framework that had been attempted to analyze and interpret the changing trends in Filipino migration in East Asia.

This chapter highlighted the various literature gaps on nationalism, migration, identity and theorizing in Filipino diaspora studies in East Asia. This was done by setting the tone and need to have a deeper theorizing that explicitly explores the role of various actors in the promotion, understanding and practice of nationalism within the context of Filipino migration in East Asia. After discussing the main literature gaps in this chapter, the next chapter will be devoted to theorizing the concept of diaspora nationalism, highlighting its typologies and above all the role and dynamics of the different actors in promoting their version of diaspora nationalism, and through this process, shape the reimagining of the nation, national identity and nationalism.

## Chapter Three
## From *Bagong Bayan*i to Global Filipino:
## Analyzing the Filipino Diaspora Through Diaspora Nationalisms

After discussing the main research questions and theoretical framework in chapter one and the literature gaps in chapter two, this chapter will focus on theorizing the concepts of diaspora nationalism. This chapter will explore in detail and theorize the typology of the diaspora nationalisms, highlighting their origin, main features and how these typologies of diaspora nationalism will be used to analyze the succeeding chapters. Afterwards, this chapter will then be discussing the role of migrant discourses, particularly on how they relate to the promotion of diaspora nationalisms and the reimagining of the Filipino nation.

One of the main features in which the contending diaspora nationalisms and the reimagination of the nation is discussed is through the development and promotion of the various migrant discourses. Through these migrant discourses, starting with the *Bagong Bayani* all the way to the Global Filipino, various themes and ideas are promoted by various social actors, such as the promise of migrant protection and diaspora development, the advent of a culture of migration in the Philippines, and the emergence of the discourse of the Global Filipino. Using Baumann's approach on discourse analysis, this chapter will show how the dominant discourses by the state and civil society produce their own version of heroism and martyrdom to promote their own agenda and goals, while migrants themselves have their own forms of demotic discourses, interpreting and negotiate their own understanding of what it means to be a migrant and part of the Filipino diaspora.

The first section will discuss the typologies of diaspora nationalisms, to be followed by a discussion on the interplay between diaspora discourses and the political economy behind Philippine migration. This chapter will conclude by analyzing the role and dynamics on the political economy and discourses of migration in promoting these diaspora nationalisms and how they relate to the reimagining of the Filipino nation.

### 3.1. Theorizing the Typologies of Diaspora Nationalisms

Jumping off Anderson's "Imagined Communities" and his conceptualization of long-distance nationalism, this dissertation introduces the concept and typologies of diaspora nationalism. Seen as a form of long-distance nationalism, this research defines Diaspora Nationalism as the process in which various social actors use Filipino nationalism, national identity and "Filipinoness" as a means to reach out to the Filipino diaspora and promote their own agenda and interpretation of the Filipino diaspora experience, mainly directed toward migrants. This research theorizes and conceptualizes three ideal types of diaspora nationalisms, namely that of official nationalism, alternative nationalism and demotic nationalism.

**Table 3.1. Typologies of Diaspora Nationalism**

| Main Ideal Types | Major Social Actors | Sub-types |
|---|---|---|
| Official Nationalism | State and Elites | |
| Alternative Nationalism | Civil Society Groups | Revolutionary Approach (RA)<br>Radical Democratic Perspective (RD) |
| Demotic Nationalism | Migrant Communities (abroad and at the homeland) | |

Source: Table prepared by the author.

Based from the table above, this research also shows the main social actors and sub-types within these diaspora nationalism typologies. Although there are also some overlapping of influence by the social actors toward specific diaspora nationalism ideal types, such as how the state also interacts and influences alternative nationalism, this table shows who are the major social actors that play a big role in shaping these specific typologies.

**Table 3.2. Main Features of the Diaspora Nationalisms**

| Official nationalism |
|---|
| a) working abroad as a sacrifice for the nation and the migrant's family<br>b) helping the homeland through sending of remittances, investments and philanthropic donations<br>c) maintaining the good name and image of the Filipino while working abroad |
| Alternative nationalism |
| a) an alternative nationalist model distinct from the official nationalism with its roots from the National Democratic movement (ND)<br>b) critical to the state's labor export policies and failure to provide protection to migrants<br>c) the best way to serve the nation is by being politically active and being critical of the state's policies on migration and development |
| Demotic nationalism |
| a) negotiated and popular understanding of the dominant discourses directed towards the migrants by the state and advocacy groups<br>b) new basis of nationalism which is distinct from the diverging versions promoted by the state and advocacy groups, but rather based on the shared lived experiences of the diaspora<br>c) reflects migrant agency through their instrumental and pragmatic thinking which goes beyond the assumptions of the state and advocacy groups |

Source: Prepared by the author.

As has been mentioned in the previous literature review chapter, while there has been literature discussing how the state and civil society groups have reached out towards migrants to promote their agenda and interpretation of the Philippine diaspora experience, much of the discussion assume that migrants are passive receptacles of these diverging notions of national identity and calls for nationalism. Although there have been also studies that have shown migrants as exhibiting agency and are not passive receptors of these nation-building discourses (Rodriguez 2010, Tyner 2009, Hau 2004), it has not been framed within a continuum of diverging nationalisms directed towards them. As such, this will be one of the main contribution of this research, that of using a theorized continuum of typologies of nationalisms specifically directed towards migrants and the overalll Philippine diaspora experience. The next section will discuss in detail these proposed typologies and will attempt to theorize these concepts by highlighting the main social actors, the dynamics between themselves and how these theorizing contributes to the existing body of literature on migration and nationalism.

### 3.1.1. Official Nationalism

While there are various definitions of official nationalism, this dissertation uses the definition proposed by Anderson (1994):

> Official nationalism is a form of nationalism, which surfaces as an emanation and armature of the state. It manifests itself, not merely in official ceremonies of commemoration, but in a systematic program, directed primarily, if not exclusively, through the state's school system, to create and disseminate an official nationalist history, an official nationalist culture, through the ranks of its younger, incipient citizens – naturally, in the state's own interests. These interests are first and foremost in instilling faith in, reverence for, and obedience to, its very self (103).

Borrowing from the classical modernist paradigms that followed models of "nation-building" (Smith 1998: 2-3) this dissertation discussion of official nationalism as a form of diasporic nationalism focuses particularly on how the state creates official versions of images, modern myths and discourses to reach out to their migrants abroad.

Indeed, nationalism scholars such as Anderson (1994) and Smith (1995) often discuss how the state promotes its own version of official state ideology and nationalism to maintain the coherence of the state, such as through the modernism tradition that "regards the nation and nationalism as inherently modern phenomena, with the nation as an essentially modern construct and nationalism as its modern cement, both resulting from the specifically modern conditions of capitalism, industrialism, mass communications and secularism, and consciously designed by elites to meet the requirements of modernity" (Smith 1995: 35). While this might be the case, this dissertation focuses particularly on how the state conceptualizes official nationalisms and directs it towards the Filipino diaspora.

#### 3.1.1.1. State-Led Nationalism

Whenever we discuss how migrants understand and practice of nationalism in the Philippine context, it goes beyond the simple expressions of patriotism and love of country by the Filipino diaspora. Indeed the interplay between nationalism and migration is best exhibited by the Philippine diaspora experience in all of migration studies research. Nothing comes to mind faster than the role of the state in promoting nationalism as directed towards migrants, as during the Marcos era. This is only fitting when it was during the Marcos era that introduced Filipino overseas labor to the world through its "manpower export" policies during the 1970's. However before we go in detail into the history of Philippine labor migration, it is important to first explore the "nation-building" agenda of the Marcos regime.

In explaining the concept of nation-building, Smith discusses how the 1960's introduced the "classical model of nation-building", which was prevalent in the decolonization in Asia and Africa and was influential to policy-makers of that time (1998). He further discusses "the efforts of nationalist leaders to 'build' nations by creating effective institutions which would express the norms of a civic nation, aggregate the interests of its citizens and enable them to translate their needs and ideals into effective policies" (1998: 20).

While Smith defines and explains the prevalence of nation-building, other scholars differentiate nation-building from state-building, explaining that while nation-building focus on the building of various institutions and mobilizing its citizens for the growth of nascent nation-states, state-building in closer analysis seems to focus on how the state and current administration/regime props up and continues its rule and dominance. This was clearly the case during the Marcos regime, which scholars such as Quimpo, Hedman and Sidel discuss.

These explain that under the Marcos regime, while the state had several "nation-building" projects, in closer analysis, they can be described as state-building projects to promote the interests of the current regime. Some of these projects include the failed attempt by the Marcos regime to rename the Philippines as the *Maharlika* (noble) nation, with *Maharlika* being the *Tagalog* word for nobility. Ostensibly used as a nation-building project to change the name of the republic beyond its colonial name which was named after King Philip II of Spain, Quimpo argues that this failed attempt was part of the whole state-building apparatus and prop up the *Bagong Lipunan* (New Society) policies of the Marcos regime (2003). Hedman and Sidel explain the logic and failure of the half-hearted official nationalism and state-building project known as *Maharlika*:

> Without an indigenous aristocracy of pre-colonial heritage, a heroic revolutionary independence struggle of recent vintage, or an effectively absolutising central state to draw upon, 'official nationalism' in the Philippines was doomed to be an unsuccessful enterprise, especially in the clumsy, greedy, and blood-stained hands of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos (2000: 159).

Other than attempting to change the nations name, the Marcos regime also attempted to renew national symbols and myths; from national trees, plants and animals, together

with an attempt to create a cult following based on Marcos' persona. This was exemplified by his commissioning of a biopic, also named *Maharlika*, showing his alleged bravery during the Second World War as a guerilla fighter (Quimpo 2003). Although the *Maharlika* state-building project of the Marcos regime was a failure, some of its other state-building projects still persists even today.

One of the main thrusts of these state-building projects is to reach out toward the Filipino migrants and overseas Filipinos. Initially conceived as a stop-gap solution to the balance of payments and unemployment problems of the state, Marcos' policies of sending labor migrants have been economically successful and as such has made the state dependent to it until the present period. Other than seeking to maximize their labor through remittances, the state has always attempted to reach out toward the migrants even when they were working or living permanently abroad. For the contractual labor migrants, who were refered to as the Overseas Contractual Worker (OCW), they were tasked to be model contractual laborers and to make their country proud even while they were in less than ideal work and living conditions abroad. Other than the expectation of good behavior, it was also mandatory for the OCWs to send their remittances through official state channels that includes high remittances fee and taxes for the state. The responsibilities and rules to govern these labor migrants were administered mainly through various seminars that migrants need to take before leaving for their labor destinations.

Other than labor migrants, the state continously kept tabs of the Filipino migrants who have decided to settle permanently abroad. Known commonly as overseas Filipinos (OF), they were mostly settled in the English speaking and traditional migrant receiving countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia. Although permanent migration to the US has been going on since the 1930's with emigrant laborers known as the *manongs* (literally uncle in Filipino) to in California, crop harvesters in Hawaii and the demands for nurses since Philippine independence (Tiongson 2008, Choy 2003), it was only during the Marcos regime that the state consciously reached out toward these Overseas Filipinos. During the Marcos regime, the state reached out toward these permanent migrants by labelling them as *Balikbayan* (returning émigré visitors) and were invited to visit the homeland through various

schemes such as special tourism packages, special tax breaks and promoting various investment opportunities for these visiting Filipinos. Furthermore, by highlighting the economic and infrastucture advances in the Philippine islands, these Balikbayan were also expected to promote the Marcos regime once they returned to their new countries of residence. This was evident with the passing of the Presidential Decree 1412 in June 1978 which created a specialized bureaucracy to reach out to these Balikbayan. This agency, which was then known as the Office of Emigrant Affairswas tasked to promote these Balikbayan projects and also were conducting various pre-departure *Bagong Lipunan* orientations (Blanc 1994).[29] These seminars which eventually evolved to its more benign form in today's pre-departure orientation seminars (PDOS) gave a premium to the need for OCWs and Balikbayans to be proud of their national identity while they were abroad.[30] Other than these seminars, the agency was tasked with reaching out to overseas Filipinos for state-building purposes, it also had the responsibility to keep tabs of the growing number of overseas-based political activists and exiles based in the US and Europe.

While it is natural for Filipino migrants to express their patriotism and love of country by sending their remittances to their love ones back home or by contributing to small development projects in their hometowns, what these state-building projects promoted by the state highlight is that the state has always played a major role in promoting official nationalism for the good and interest of the state. Although the state will frequently talk about helping the nation through these projects, in closer analysis, they are more closely linked as projects of state-building rather than nation-building perse. Furthermore, they can also be considered as initiatives that promote instrumental citizenship, which can be defined as using citizenship as a means to promote the stability and legitimacy of the state (Aguilar 1999). Aguilar cite the case of how various nation-states in Southeast Asia has pursued instrumental citizenship, such as the Marcos regime: “without redrawing the boundaries of the imagined national

[29] This government agency later became the Commission for Filipinos Overseas (CFO). The CFO and their role in reaching out to overseas Filipinos for development projects will be discussed further in chapter six.

[30] This became more problematic as the labor demands shifted from largely male contractual labor to female work in the Asian region, bringing the feminization of migration in the 1980's. The vulnerability of these migrants leads towards the whole narrative and debate on the concept of transnational shame, which was discussed in the previous chapter.

community, Marcos instrumentalised citizenship in pursuit of his own foreign policy objectives in order to lend legitimacy and stability to his – then new martial law regime" (1999: 316). Other than discussing these state-building projects and initiatives, one of the primary means that they are successfully promoted is through the use of various narratives and discourses, such as the *Balikbayan* and *Bagong Bayani*. These narratives and discourses will be explored further in the later section of this chapter.

#### 3.1.1.2. Elitist Nationalism

Although scholars have already discussed the role of the state in promoting official nationalism, there has been less focus on the role of the elite in promoting values that are in line and similar to official nationalism. This is important considering the fact that Philippine studies, in particular political science and history have always used the framework of elite-dominated Philippine society. Some of these studies in Philippine political science include Sidel's discussion on the phenomenon of "bossism" in the Philippines (1999), the role of the Philippine elite in purpetuating a patrimonial-oligrachic state (Hutchcroft 1998) or the role of the elite in shaping Philippine political life from the Marcos regime until the present period (Quimpo 2008a). Although the literature on Philippine elites have been limited in relating them to the Philippine diaspora, the Philippine elites and to an extent, middle class sensibilities also have an impact to the Filipino diaspora experience.

While not directly related to Philippine migration in particular, the Philippine elite is nevertheless affected by the diaspora experience, as exemplified by the concept of transnational shame as felt by the elite. Although it does not directly relate to how official nationalism, the elite often react and are conscious on the "proper" representation of Filipino national identity through their elite sensibilities. One study that explores this dynamic is the essay by Aguilar (1996) entitled "The Dialectics of Trasnational Shame and National Identity". In particular, Aguilar cites the case wherein the Filipino people feels shameful for the negative images, perceptions and consequences of Filipino labor migration, particularly of the vulnerable domestic helpers and entertainers in Asia. Although the feelings and concerns that the Filipino name is tarnished due to the presence of pitiful migrants working abroad exists, what distinguishes Aguilar's analysis from other scholars, who mostly dwell on the

victimization of the migrants, is that he looks further and explores on how migrants and their families themselves view the image of the troubled Filipino migrant.

He argues that although the elites (and the middle class) gives a premium to the supposed shame brought by the negative perceptions and outcomes of migration to the Filipino nation and the Filipino people, migrants themselves are less troubled by this perception. For them, they don't necessarily see the presence of the their blue-collar and less than glamorous jobs as shameful. Indeed, most view their work as honest labor which not only helps their families, but helps the nation through their hard-earned remittances. Rather than be concerned with the image of the migrant Filipino, what they are concerned about is the possibility of negative outcomes, namely that of coming home empty handed after commiting their resources and hardwork to go abroad. Indeed, for the Filipino migrant, they view their migrant experience as a journey, one that expresses fatalism on its possible outcome. Aguilar shows that migrants are not too concerned with maintaining a positive Filipino image based on norms by the elite, but rather they are concerned with coming home as panalo or talo (winner or loser) to their migrant journey.[31]

After discussing the dynamics between the Philippine elite and migration, we should also consider the role of the middle class sensibilities in the migrant experience. In considering the often unhighlighted role of the middle class in the migrant experience, it is only natural that the middle class also has some values and norms that are similar to the ideals of the Philippine elite. Furthermore, while we may discuss the tendency of the elite to promote elitists and conservative values vis-a-vis migration, we can assertain not everything is clear cut as being exclusively in the interest of the elite. In fact we can see that even the middle class also promotes their own agendas regarding migration policies that can be part of the more conservative continuum. This is evident for example on the often common positions and views of the elite and middle class on diaspora philanthropy.

[31] The concept and dichotomy of the *panalo* and *talo* on migrant outcomes will be discussed further on the chapter six which focuses on the debates on migration and development nexus.

While some activists may view middle class and elite positions as conservative and reactionary, the middle class and the elites have common positions regarding diaspora philanthropy, particularly on their views regarding the positive potential of migration in developing the country. Meanwhile a closer look on the power dynamics and diverging views on migration and development through diaspora philanthropy will be explored further in chapter six by highlighting the views and perspectives by the largely middle class and arguably elitist perspective of *Gawad Kalinga* (give care), a Philippine-based urban renewal movement with active participants within the homeland and various overseas Filipino communities across the world.

### 3.1.2. Alternative Nationalism

Whenever the concepts of nationalism and the state are discussed, having dissenting positions against the state is often seen as being unpatriotic or unnationalistic. Indeed, this is often the case since people often equate nationalism to the official version promoted by the state. While this may be true in some instances, in the case of the Philippines, it is often the case wherein the most critical of the state are the most nationalist in ideology. Although nationalist fervor had always existed since the Spanish and American colonial period to the early years of Philippine independence after the Second World War, one of the oldest and well known of such post-war nationalist movement is the National Democratic (ND) movement which grew in strength especially during the Marcos dictatorship in the 1970's. In order to understand this movement in the context of the nationalism and migration, we need to first explore the context and basis of their nationalist activism and how they attempt to promote their alternative version of nationalism in the Philippines.

The succeeding chapters will explore specific case studies of advocacy groups espousing alternative nationalism. Meanwhile, this section on alternative nationalism is divided into five subsections, each of which roughly coincides with the thematic timeline of alternative nationalism and its relation with migrant advocacy as shown in Table 3.2. The first subsection sets the context of alternative nationalism by discussing the role of political and progressive NGOs and advocacy groups in Philippine civil society. The next subsection meanwhile will discuss the emergence of the national democracy movement of the Philippine left, which became the basis of an alternative

nationalism which is critical to the official nationalism promoted by the state. The third section then explains how the nascent national democratic movement has extended its campaigns not only to other countries through their "international work", but gradually work for migrant rights and advocacy. While the ND movement has been in the forefront of migrant campaigns, they experienced a major ideological split during the early 1990's, which had a tremendous impact, not only on migrant advocacy, but also the Philippine left and political civil society as a whole. Finally, the last subsection traces how the split of the ND movement led to the creation of parallel clusters of migrant advocacy organizations, resulting in the creation of two sub-types that practice alternative nationalism on diaspora issues.

**Table 3.3. Thematic Timeline of Alternative Nationalism and Migration Advocacy**

| | |
|---|---|
| Until the 1960s | Presence of Civil Society organizations for clean elections, democratic campaigns<br>Big role of non-political organizations such as the church groups and other civic / associational organizations |
| 1970s | Growth of the National Democracy Movement (ND) during Martial Law and the Marcos Regime |
| 1980s | ND movement spread into “international work” and gradually into labor migration advocacy work |
| 1990s | Split of the ND movement into the Reaffirmist (RA) and Rejectionist (RJ) |
| 2000s | Migrant advocacy work and networks reflect the split of the ND movement, with parallel clusters of organizations reflecting the subtypes of alternative nationalism, namely the Reaffirmist following the Revolutionary Approach (RA-RA) while the some Rejectionist organizations following the Radical Democratic Perspective (RJ-RD) |

Source: Table prepared by the author, with data discussions from Shuto 2008, Quimpo 2008a, Hilhorst 2003.

### 3.1.2.1. Context of Alternative Nationalism and Civil Society in the Philippines

In discussing civil society in the Philippines, much literature has discussed the impact of civil society in restoring democracy after the Marcos regime. Scholars have pointed out the long tradition of Philippine civil society in bringing democratic participation from the Spanish colonial period until the present post-Marcos regimes. Shuto discuss the wide ideological spectrum of civil society groups in the Philippines, highlighting that although they are often fragmented or in competition with each other, they are generally successful in doing their mandate and goals in spite of many limitations that they face (Shuto et al 2008). Hedman meanwhile discusses the role of broad coalitions and mobilizations by various civil society groups during and after the

Marcos regime in support of liberal democracy by exploring the role of NGOs in the free election campaigns through the years (2006). Indeed, while these scholarship discusses the contributions of these large civil society coalitions and the extent of the largely non-political organizations in enhancing social capital in various segments of Philippine social life, other scholars such as Hilhorst discuss the importance of the more politicized segment of Philippine civil society, which she refers to as progressive NGOs, namely those associated with social protest and oppositional politics (2003: 13).[32]

An interesting distinction and typology on Philippine civil society is proposed by Quimpo on his essay "The Emergent Left Engagement in Civil Society" (2008a). Jumping off from the civil society theories of Robert Putnam (1995), Quimpo categorizes civil society organizations who are "non-political" but have a big role in building social capital as associational civil society, while those organizations who are political in nature and play a role in bringing political dynamism and opposition to the present government administrations or dictatorships as counterweight civil society (95). While these distinctions have already been discussed in similar civil society studies and literature, Quimpo proceeds by adding an additional typology which jumps off Laclau and Moff's discussion of civil society groups in the democratic left. Describing the third typology as being hegemonic/counter-hegemonic civil society, Quimpo defines them as organizations that act not only as a powerful counterpoise to the state, but above all is part of the internal contestation – the struggle of subordinate classes and marginalized groups against the hegemonic elite *within* civil society (96).

Besides Quimpo, Hilhorst also emphasizes the political nature of Philippine civil society organizations. She explains that one of the main distinction between Philippine NGOs compared with those in other countries lies in their political nature: “an important ground for distinction among Philippine NGOs is their political identity. Philippine NGOs do not represent a unified development 'community', but mirror the full range of Philippine political interests and contradictions” (2003: 12).

[32] The term “progressive” is often used as another term to refer to leftist political ideology or political organizations in the Philippines. Organizations in the Philippines often label themselves as progressive rather than using other terms such as leftist, socialist, revolutionary or radical.

Based from the theoretical discussions of Quimpo and Hilhorst as a framework to understand Philippine civil society, this dissertation will explore the role of civil society organizations and advocacy groups using their definition of civil society, which is inclusive in nature but largely seen as political organizations. In particular, this dissertation will discuss migrant advocacy groups which are linked presently or in the past with the larger social movement known as the National Democratic (ND) movement.

### 3.1.2.2. The National Democratic Movement in Philippine Civil Society

The National Democratic (ND) movement is the largest and oldest surviving leftist movement in the Philippines. Started as an off shoot from the Soviet-style *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* or the Philippine Communist Party (PKP) during the 1970's, this movement was founded by Jose Maria Sison before the start of Marcos' Martial Law when he started the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), which follows a Maoist model in ideology and strategy. What distinguishes the CPP and the ND movement from other socialist movements in the Philippines was its nationalist stance against the Philippine elite and US imperialism in the Philippine islands.[33]

In his analysis on the socio-political problems that has plagued the country since the Spanish and American colonial period to the post-World War 2 independence, Sison articulated in his seminal book *Struggle for National Democracy* (1967) the three main enemies of Philippine society: U.S. imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism (3). Although there had been revolutions that had been nationalist in character (such as the Philippine revolution against the Spanish and Americans) and the socialist labor movements (such as the Philippine Communist Party), Sison argues that what sets the national democratic movement apart is their principal stress on the national and agrarian stuggle agains US imperialism and feudalism (64).

Thus the national democratic movement is *nationalist*, in that it harkens to the old nationalist figures since the Spanish times, particularly with Jose Rizal and Andres

[33] It should be noted that National Democrats (ND) are ideologically different from the Social Democrats (SD) in the Philippines. For a more in-depth discussion on the ND and the CPP, see Quimpo (2008a).

Bonifacio, to the nationalist figures from the American colonial period unto the 1960's. While they are nationalist, they are also *democratic* in that their analysis always follows a socialist ideology that is critical of the Philippine ruling elite in pursuing their interests with the help of their US imperialist backers, thus preventing genuine democracy to reach the Filipino masses. This clearly shows how the ND movement is fundamentally nationalist in ideology and maoist-socialist in approach. Indeed this theme was reiterated by Sison when he argues that: "There is only one nationalism that we appreciate. It is that which refers to the national democratic revolution, the Philippine revolution, whose main tasks now are the liquidation of imperialism and feudalism to achieve full national freedom and democratic reforms" (1967:9). This ideological analysis formed the basis for the emergence of the nascent national democratic movement in the 1960's, and highlights its nationalist character that was promoted as an alternative nationalism to the official nationalism as espoused by the state and its landed elites.

Together with the CPP as the main political party, the New People's Army (NPA) as its military arm, and the New Democratic Front (NDF), which was the main coalition holding the CPP and NPA with various civil society organizations, such as NGOs, Peoples' Organizations (PO) and labor unions, the ND movement was the largest and most well organized political opposition against the Marcos dictatorship.

While other scholars focus on the history, impact and ideology of the ND movement, Hilhorst (2003) explains the influence of the ND movement in Philippine civil society and explores the everyday politics of NGOs in the Philippines by focusing on the various NGO discourses attached to NGO gender campaigns in the Cordillera region in the northern Philippines. By focusing on the role of the ND movement in the growth civil society groups in the Philippines, Hilhorst explains the discourses of NGOism and NGO making through her studies on Indigenous Peoples (IP) advocacy organizations in the Northern Philippines.

While Hilhorst mainly focuses on ND movement and the changes faced by these organizations within the ND movement from the 1990's to the present decade, Quimpo gives a more critical view of the ND movement. In his essay "Threat to Democracy or

Democratizing Force?", Quimpo explores the role of the Philippine left in the post-Marcos Philippine democracy (2008a). While some scholars mainly discuss how the Philippine left has weakened since the fall of the Marcos dictatorship, Quimpo counters that in fact the Philippine left is still influential. In particular, he argues three points:

> First, the Philippine left is very much alive and has made a certain degree of recovery in recent years; Second, the communist movement has exhibited both democratic and undemocratic features but has been more of an undemocratic than a democratic or democratizing force. Its instrumentalization of POs/NGOs and social movements negates its supposed leading role in the struggle for civil society; and Third, while the CPP remains a threat to Philippine democracy, new Left parties and groups that are more democratically oriented have emerged and are now making an earnest bid to challenge the hegemony of the oligarchic elite (55-56).

In explaining his argument on how the ND movement is undemocratic, Quimpo cites the case on how the ND movement still maintains an "instrumentalist view" on the role of civil society in the Philippines. He defines this as viewing civil society groups and NGOs not as the main thrust and avenues for bringing reform in the Philippine political scene, but rather being only an instrument to support the larger Maoist strategy of the ND movement, of overthrowing the Philippine state into its own version of socialism.[34]

#### 3.1.2.3. National Democratic Movement and Migration

After discussing the role and impact of the ND movement in Philippine civil society, this sub section will discuss their role in migration and migrant advocacy. As part of the larger mass movement, the ND movement has representatives and advocacy in various issues and segments of Philippine life, such as labor, rural and urban poor, gender, Indigenious Peoples (IP), and migrants. While migrant advocacy is one of the biggest campaign within the ND movement as evidenced by the network and advocacy activities of Migrante International, their migrant sector arm, migrant advocacy hasn't always been in the within the forefront of the ND movement.

In his essay exploring the activities and campaigns by the ND activists and organizations based in Europe during the Marcos era, Quimpo explains that initially, the

[34] While Hilhorst herself acknowledges the "instrumental" nature of NGOs in the ND movement, her discussion lies on how these ND groups view their instrumental nature as a solution to the main problem faced by Philippine civil society, which they refer to as the Malady of NGOism (2003: 62).

movement didn't emphasize what they called "international work" (2008b). With their main thrust working for the main mass movements in the Philippines to fight the Marcos dictatorship, their activities abroad were initially limited to relying on mainly young Filipino activists who had migrated to the US. Propaganda and mobilizing material support - mainly financial, not arms - were the CPP's main objectives in the US (2008b: 352).[35] While their activities were limited initially, it was only in the 1990's that the foreign-based offices of the CPP-NDF in Europe and the US began to start their international work in which they portrayed themselves as a national liberation organization. The focus their international work in three areas: diplomatic work, broad solidarity work and organizing overseas Filipinos (which includes both labor migrants and permanent residents).

As their international work began to grow, these overseas-based ND organizations began to agitate and reach out towards the overseas Filipino communities, initially as a potential source of long-distance nationalist funding. Indeed, their initial focus was towards the overseas Filipino communities of *balikbayans* and permanent migrants in the US since they were seen as the largest potential for financial support. It was only after a few years, which coincided with growth of labor migration to Asia and the feminization of migration that the ND movement began to work and campaign for the labor migrants in Asia in their own right. Quimpo explains: "Overseas Filipinos would be organized and mobilized not just on the basis of gathering financial, material and technical support for the revolutionary movement, but also and more importantly, on the basis of their own issues and concerns" (2008b: 354).

One of the main actors for migrant advocacy within the ND movement was the nascent Asia Pacific Mission for Migrant Filipinos (APMMF), which is based in Hong Kong. Alcid (2006) explains that with the growth of the migrant sector, the APMMF began to actively campaign for migrant rights, campaigning for migrant rights not only toward the host nation but the homeland as well. They advocated for reform of migrant policies, which includes their successful campaign to stop Marcos' Executive Order No.

[35] These activities of fund raising for mass movements and independence movements was discussed by Kapur wherein he mentions the "Janus face of migration" in which remittances can be used for less than peaceful means. Similar case studies include the campaigns by the overseas based Tamils and Palentines (Kapur 2007).

857 which required migrants to send their remittances through official state financial channels. Their success in Asia led the APMMF to create various organizations and networks of migrants and migrant activists in Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, and the Middle East. Indeed as Alcid has shown, the campaign for migrants grew in relevance and became one of the key component within the ND movement, culminating in the formation of Migrante International, the main ND coalition which even attempted to participate in the various party-list elections in the Philippines in 2000.

#### 3.1.2.4. Split in the National Democratic Movement and its Impact to Philippine Civil Society

With the fall of the Marcos regime after the successful EDSA revolution of 1986, the CPP-NDF and the ND movement was affected by the sudden turn of events. Believing that the participating in the 1986 snap election prior to the EDSA revolution was a sign of accomodating with the Marcos regime, the CPP-NDF decided to boycott the elections, and through this process the Philippine left was marginalized with the new government led by Corazon Aquino. With the 1986 boycott and the Marcos regime over, the CPP and the ND movement was forced to reflect upon their ideological position and strategies from here on out. Although the ND movement was still influential and has still had a wide network of civil society organizations and coalitions, there was much debate and discussions within the ND movement.

Indeed, Quimpo explains that these debates came to a head in early 1992, when the newly reelected chairman Sison put out the controversial document entitled "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles and Rectift the Errors", in which he called for a reaffirmation of their original Maoist strategy and reiteration of the instrumental role of their various civil society organizations within the ND movement (2008a: 61). While there were supporters of the “reaffirm” position, many cadres and activists became dissattisfied with the top-down approach employed by the central politburo wherein consultations and discussions were not accommodated with the larger number of cadres and party members (Quimpo 2007). This led the ND movement to suffer an

ideological and strategic split, leading to the division between the so-called Reaffirmists (RA) and the Rejectionists (RJ).[36]

One of the main effects of this split was the reorientation and reevaluation of the Philippine left on their role in the Philippine political sphere and civil society. Hilhorst explains the profound effect of the split among the NGOs during this period:

> Neither friends nor foes of the movement had anticipated quite how much this split would affect the National Democratic NGOs, which appeared through time to have loosened their ties to the underground movement. What evolved, however, was something close to a battlefield. NGOs and coalitions split apart, accompanied by fierce fights, and staff were ousted by whatever means, includin dragging up age-old controversies (2003: 15).

In summary, progressive civil society organizations had to reevaluate and decide whether to continue with the call for reaffirming in the ND movement or to move away from it. The organizations who remained with the ND movement reaffirmed the RA position and and became what is known as the 'new National Democratic movement'; while those who decided to move beyond the ND, rejected the "instrumentalist view" on the role of civil society organizations in supporting the larger ND mass movement.

With the split in the Philippine left, the split was also felt by the various civil society organizations in all of the major social segments and campaigns, which included the migrant advocacy sector as well. This split led to the present system wherein parallel migrant advocacy and service oriented NGOs and civil organizations exists which are ultimately divided along the original fault lines. This split led to the diverging strategies and positions of these migrant civil society organizations in key ideological and the strategic positions regarding migration campaigns and advocacy. These will be explored further and will be highlighted in the succeeding chapters, namely the diverging campaigns by migrant organizations in Hong Kong and their stance regarding the migration-development nexus in chapter four and six respectively.

[36] For a more detailed discussion on the history of the split and the ideological debates between the Reaffirmists and Rejectionists, see Quimpo (2008a: 54-93).

### 3.1.2.5. Typologies of Alternative Nationalism

After discussing the context of civil society and migration, this section will discuss the definition and typology of alternative nationalism that this dissertation uses. Jumping off from Rodriguez's research on migrant advocacy groups, this research will use her definition of alternative nationalism. Discussing how organizations have formed an alternative nationalism that is critical of the state's policies on migrant labor export, she defines alternative nationalism as: "a politicized and historicized national identity that posits a link between Filipino migrants, emigrants and those who continue to live in the Philippines not merely as Filipinos but as Filipinos displaced by global capitalism relegating them to labor as ethnicized low-wage workers around the world" (2002: 354).

As explained in the earlier sections, although a large portion of civil society organizations are critical of the state's policies on labor migration, these organizations do differ in their approaches and opinions on specific issues and strategies to work for migrant rights. Reflecting the previously mentioned split in the Philippine left and civil society organization, so do the migrant advocacy groups based in the Philippines and in the various host countries across the world have an ideological split based on political positions and strategies employed. As such, this dissertation proposes two sub-typologies of alternative nationalism, namely that of the Revolutionary Approach (RA) and the Radical Democratic Perspective (RD).

**Revolutionary Approach (RA) and the Radical Democratic Perspective (RD)**

In his study exploring the split among the progressive and progressive civil society groups in the Philippines, Quimpo compares the cleavage within the Philippine left to a comparable division of Peru's civil society movement (2008: 192). Citing the emergence of two clashing strategic perspectives of the Peruvian Left's involvement in local politics, Schonwalder describes the groups as following either:

> The "revolutionary approach" holds that the Left should make local government serve mainly as a venue for ventilating popular demands, which are deemed "unfulfillable" under the existing order, to build a political movement capable of overthrowing the state. The "radical-democratic perspective" postulates that leftist intervention in local politics "should serve to demonstrate its capacity to govern within the existing political institutions while opening them up to popular participation from below (1998: 76-77).

Using the same typology of approaches as suggested by Schonwalder and Quimpo, this dissertation will use the same typology to define and differentiate the diverging approaches and strategies employed by the migrant civil society movement in the Philippines and in East Asia. Indeed, the next chapters will show how the various migrant advocacy groups can be defined by how they work toward migrant rights and protection through their diverging of strategies and ideology. While various aspects and trends have been discussed, it should be pointed out that while these coalitions exists, they are nevertheless ideal types and as such, there will be cases of some NGOs and organizations which explicitly follow the ideals of their migrant advocacy cluster, and yet do activities and strategies diverging from their primary objectives.

In the succeeding chapters, we will show the main thematic differences and strategies employed by these two sub types of alternative nationalism civil society groups. For the RA sub groups which represents organizations who are part of the ND movement, their main focus is on being the "genuine voice" of migrants through their POs or what they call as grassroots organizations. Reflecting on the problems faced by civil society organizations since the Marcos regime, their critical on the policies of labor migrant export of the state and on the hand, the problems of NGOism and approaches by their RD counterparts regarding specific issues and stances on migrant rights and campaigns.

For those organizations following the RD approach meanwhile, they are also critical of the state's dependence to migration and its policies which offer limited protection and support to these migrants. However what distinguishes them from their RA counterparts is that they also pursue the reform of migrant policies and also cooperation with various state institutions and offices as much as possible. Other than their cooperation with the state, they also give importance in the role of international lobbying efforts and the role of international and regional bodies for migrant rights.

### 3.1.3. Demotic Nationalism

After discussing the main differences on how the state and advocacy groups promote nationalism directed towards migrants, one of the main research questions pursued by this dissertation relates to how migrants themselves understand and

practice nationalism. Indeed, while the state reaches out towards the migrants by promoting official nationalism and while advocacy organizations promote their own version of alternative nationalism, the state and advocacy organizations assumed to be the voice or the representation for the interests and rights of migrants. While this may be the case, the state and advocacy groups has often taken for granted the agency of migrants on how they perceive these appeals to nationalism directed towards them. To address this crucial gap and due to the lack of literature that specifically explores how migrants themselves understand and practice diaspora nationalism, this dissertation proposes a third type of diaspora nationalism.

While this dissertation proposes looking specifically into how migrants themselves understand nationalism, other scholars have done similarly focused on the migrants while using different approaches in their studies. Using a historical approach, Kleinschmidt explores in his book *People on the Move: Attitudes toward and Perceptions of Migration in Medieval and Modern Europe* how migrants have their own views on the concept of the nation which is distinct from that imposed by the sovereigns in medieval Europe (2003). Papastergiadis (2000) on the other hand criticizes how migration studies in general "tend to focus on single major factors and track the consequences of dominant structures rather than attend to obscure networks or subtle processes" (33) and as such, suggests on the need of an approach where "the identity of the migrants is not subordinate to external categories, but formed out of their own experience of movement and settlement" (35). Similar to Kleinschmidt and Papastergiadis, Baumann uses a similar focus on the views of the everyday person using a discourse analysis approach. In his book entitled *Contesting Culture: Discourses of Identity in Multi-Ethnic London,* Baumann discusses the discourses of identity in multi-ethnic London (1996). In this book, Baumann explores how local people have different meanings attached to the concept of 'culture' and 'community' which can be viewed into two opposing discourses, a dominant and popular counter-discourse which he labels as "demotic". He shows how they use these meanings contextually in such a way that local usage and practice "sometimes affirmed and sometimes denied the dominant discourse" (1996:30). Thus, he shows that people find room to manoeuvre within the multiplicty of discourses they have available.

Using off Baumann's framework of discourse analysis, we refer to this proposed third typology as Demotic Nationalism. Coming from the word demotic which means "everyday", this typology proposes to explore further how migrants understand and practice nationalism, which goes beyond the state and advocacy groups' effort to promote their dominant forms of official and alternative nationalism.[37] As such, we define demotic nationalism as a form of diaspora nationalisms which results from the negotiated and popular understanding of the dominant discourses directed towards them by the state and advocacy groups. Arguing that it is neither pro nor anti-state, this form of nationalism is based on the shared experiences of the diaspora. Known for its pragmatism regarding migrant outcomes, this demotic nationalism can be described as being flexible, complex, situational, and multifaceted.

Indeed, one of the key features of demotic nationalism is "negotiation". Indeed, while the practice of demotic nationalism by migrants may not have clear ideological positions on key issues, the point of the matter is that they negotiate and interpret these issues based on their interests. As such, through the practice of diaspora nationalism, migrants themselves exhibit agency through their instrumental (maximizing benefits at the least costs) and pragmatic thinking. This is reflected in the succeeding case study chapters that highlight how they themselves position their views and perspective on key issues, such as on migration and development, migration policy, efforts on integration to their host communities in foreign countries, etc.

After discussing the various typologies of the diaspora nationalisms, these contending views will be used as the analytical framework to understand the dynamics and competing views between the state, advocacy organizations and diaspora groups in the succeeding chapters. Particularly, this will be used to analyze the primacy of demotic nationalism among Filipino diaspora communities: in Hong Kong wherein although alternative nationalism is quite strong, diaspora groups are beginning to question age-old assumptions on migrant activism s they slowly move toward a more pragmatic stance; in Japan as they settle permanently and address the negative images

[37] The demotic perspective on nationalism is similar to the classic definition used by Ernest Renan in his 1882 essay "What is a Nation", wherein he defines a nation as the "plebiscite of the everyday" (Renan 1996: 52-54).

of the *Japayuki* discourse; and lastly in their home communities in the Philippines, as these diaspora groups decide for themselves on the best way to help the homeland within the larger debate of the migration-development nexus.

### 3.2. The Political Economy and Discourses of Migration: The Logic Behind Diaspora Nationalisms

After discussing the context and the typologies of diaspora nationalism, this section will discuss the political economy and discourses of Philippine migration. Exploring the political economy of migration gives us the historical background and the various phases and shifts of Philippine migration policies through the years. After discussing the political economy of migration, a discussion on the various discourse and narratives used to promote and perpetuate the state's dependence to labor migration is discussed. Defining discourses as: "more or less coherent set of references that frame the way we understand and act upon the world around us. They are an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to phenomenon" (Gasper and Apthrope 1996:2 as cited in Hilhorst 2003: 8), this section will show how the interplay behind the political economy and discourse of migration as used to promote of diaspora nationalism. Indeed, as will be shown in the succeeding chapters, the narratives and discourses of the Balikbayan, Bagong Bayani and the Global Filipino are often used to promote the various diaspora nationalisms and becomes the underlying logic behind their nationalism programs.

#### 3.2.1. From the *Bagong Bayani* to the Global Filipino: The Political Economy and Discourses of Migration

Throughout the years, various scholars have discussed the changing political economy behind Philippine migration and how it was rationalized and promoted through various discourses that reached out to the Filipino diaspora. Furthermore, as these discourses have aimed to reach out to migrants by appealing to their sense of loyalty to the nation, the years have seen the discourses from the *Balikbayan* to the Global Filipino shift in their scope and level of inclusion vis-à-vis the nation.

#### 3.2.1.1. State Sponsored Migration as Stop-gap and the Overseas Contract Worker (1974-1986)

At the time of the Marcos regime, the state faced problems of balance of payments and chronic unemployment brought about poor economic performance and the oil shocks of the 1970s. Conceived initially as a stopgap solution, the Marcos regime laid out the foundations that led to the Philippines to be one of the top labor migrant sending countries in the world. Coinciding with the oil-rich Gulf countries demand for foreign laborers to satisfy their infrastructure and construction needs, this period saw the convergence of the push-pull factors to create labor migration policies or what was then known as "manpower export" (PCIJ 2009). Seeing the potential for overseas employment, Marcos with the help of Labor Minister Blas Ople promulgated Presidential Decree 442, which created various agencies such as the Overseas Employment and Development Board (OEDB), Welfare and Training Fund for Overseas Workers (Welfund). Although labor migration was initially meant as a stopgap or temporary employment option for Filipinos until economic recovery, the convergence of stronger push-pull forces led to its inevitable institutionalization. With the increasing demand for workers in the Gulf countries and the opening of new labor markets in East and Southeast Asia, these pull factors fueled further state dependence. The push factors meanwhile have also not abated. The absence of sustained economic development, political instability, a growing population, double-digit unemployment levels, and low wages continue to compel people to look abroad (Asis 2006). Furthermore, repressive labor conditions served the Philippine government well in the promotion of its overseas employment program. Within this context, therefore, overseas employment was constructed as a viable employment strategy for thousands of Filipinos (Tyner 2000: 136). It is in the context of an emerging political economy of migration that the state introduced a new discourse for migrants.

With the twin discourses of the Overseas Contract Worker (OCW) and the *Balikbayan* (returning émigré visitors), the state heralded the contribution of both contractual labor migrants and their permanent emigrant counterparts in helping the country, and at the sate time institutionalize state-sponsored migration (Rafael 2000, Blanc 1994). In particular, the state reached out toward the *Balikbayan* to help their homeland in spite of their status as nominal citizens of their adopted countries. Indeed,

although the state attempts to reach out toward the *Balikbayan*, they are ultimately seen as "Filipino tourists" whose only scope of interaction with the nation is through the tourism dollars of the *Balikbayan* tours which highlight the progress of the nation under the *Bagong Lipunan* (New Republic) under Marcos (Blanc 1994).

### 3.2.1.2. Growing Dependence and the *Bagong Bayani* (1986-1992)

By the end of the Marcos regime, the Corazon Aquino government inherited the migration apparatus of the state. Recognizing the role of remittances in keeping the economy afloat, the Aquino administration embraced labor migration. This period saw a substantial increase in the deployment of migrants. By the end of her administration, total deployment of migrants increased from 378,214 in 1986 to 686,461 in 1992. Furthermore, the deployment of sea-based workers increased from 54,697 to 136,806 enjoying an average growth of 15% from 1986-1992 (POEA 2007).

**Table 3.4. Deployment of Documented Overseas Filipino Workers from 1986-1992**

| Year | Land-based Workers | Growth Rate (%) | Sea-based Workers | Growth Rate (%) | **TOTAL** | Growth Rate (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1986 | 323,517 | 0.94 | 54,697 | 4.60 | **378,214** | 1.46 |
| 1987 | 382,229 | 18.15 | 67,042 | 22.57 | **449,271** | 18.79 |
| 1988 | 385,117 | 0.76 | 85,913 | 28.15 | **471,030** | 4.84 |
| 1989 | 355,346 | -7.73 | 103,280 | 20.21 | **458,626** | -2.63 |
| 1990 | 334,883 | -5.76 | 111,212 | 7.68 | **446,095** | -2.73 |
| 1991 | 489,260 | 46.10 | 125,759 | 13.08 | **615,019** | 37.87 |
| 1992 | 549,655 | 12.34 | 136,806 | 8.78 | **686,461** | 11.62 |
| Average | | 9.26 | | 15.01 | | 9.89 |

Source: Compiled official statistics from the POEA (2007).

In light of increasing labor migration, Aquino emphasized the institutionalization of migration through regulation. In 1987, the restructuring of previous agencies led to the creation of the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA). Furthermore through the Foreign Service Circular 300-87 and the Administrative Code of 1987, migrant protection was assured by asking the country's foreign diplomatic staff and officers to prioritize the protection of migrants' rights and the promotion of the welfare of these migrants (Asis 2006).

With the changing socio-economic and demographic trends of East Asian countries, the region saw the emergence of new reproductive labor markets in health,

domestic and entertainment sectors. These factors led to the feminization of migration; which by 1992, female migrants had already surpassed their male counterparts. Due to the nature of the female migrant's occupation, this led to the increasing vulnerability of female workers and emergence of social problems with the families left behind. Comparing migrant children to those of non-migrants, it was found that migration has made a large impact in that parental absence creates displacements; disruptions and changes in care giving arrangements (ECMI et al 2005:63).

With the government's recognition of the migrants' role in the economy, Aquino renamed migrants from overseas contract workers (OCW) into the overseas Filipino worker (OFW). To further show the state's intention of protecting migrants' rights and expressing gratitude for their sacrifices, the discourse of the Bagong Bayani was institutionalized when Aquino in a 1988 speech to Hong Kong migrants said: "*Kayo po ang mga bagong bayani*" ("You are the new heroes")(Okamura 1998). These discourses have had a large impact in the psyche of the Filipino migrant, manifesting as factors that further shape the evolution of Philippine migration. Although seemingly benevolent and caring of migrant welfare through its programs of regulation, the Aquino government's growing dependence to migration inevitably led to future problems faced by Ramos.

During the Aquino period, the state not only promised protection for its growing number of migrant workers, it also attempted to become more inclusionary and for the first time, explicitly place the migrant worker as an instrument to help the nation. By changing the term of the overseas contract worker (OCW) to the overseas Filipino worker (OFW), the state emphasized the national identity of the migrant worker. Although these modern day heroes faced many challenges, particularly with the feminization of migration and the limitations of migrant protection offered by the state, various narratives of both success and tragedy while abroad has always been framed as a fatalistic journey which the migrant must endure, not so much for the country but as a itinerant migrant hero. Although Aquino reached out toward the migrant workers and was inclusionary towards them, it should be noted that the *Balikbayan* and permanent migrants to other countries were seen as either Filipino tourists, or worse as non-patriotic Filipinos who left the country and escaping its responsibilities to contribute to its development. It was during this period that problems of brain drain became an issue

and the discourse of transnational guilt took hold of the national consciousness. This was exemplified by Rafael's essay that highlighted the dichotomy between the Ugly *Balikbayan* and the Heroic OCWs (2000) which highlight how OCWs are seen as heroic for their sacrifices while working abroad and their contribution to national development through their hard earned remittances, while the Balikbayan on the other hand were being seen as unpatriotic for having turned their backs to the homeland. Furthermore, these Balikbayans are seen as being arrogant whenever they come home to visit the country, citing how the Philippines is underdeveloped compared to the US, which reflects the stereotypes of an what an "Ugly American" is.

### 3.2.1.3. Deregulation in the Era of *Juan Kaunlaran* and Globalization (1992-2001)

The succeeding Ramos and Estrada administrations continued with the same strategy of exporting migrant labor. However growing opposition to this strategy due to growing cases of worker abuse led the state apparatus to face one of its biggest threats since its conception. Following the media coverage of the controversial cases of Sioson, Contemplacion and Balabagan[38], the Philippine Congress responded with the passing of Republic Act 8042. Hailed as the 'Magna Carta' of overseas employment, Tyner describes the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipino Act of 1995 as portending ominous transformations of the Philippine state migratory apparatus (Tyner 2000: 144). This law emphasizes two main points that differentiate it from previous policies. These are the emphasis on migrant protection and its avowal of migration as a development strategy. Section 2C mentions that migration is seen not as a government developmental policy but merely as an employment option available for migrants. Noteworthy is the promise of the state to provide for local employment opportunities

[38] Maricris Sioson was a Filipina entertainer who was murdered in April 1991 under suspicious circumstances but was officially deemed as dying from to natural causes. This has led to the growth of Filipino public interest to the plight and situations of Filipinos in Japan.
Flor Contemplacion, meanwhile was a domestic helper working in Singapore, was executed in March 17, 1995 by Singaporean authorities after being convicted of murdering a fellow Filipino domestic helper, Delia Maga and a four year old Singaporean child leading to mass protests and a near diplomatic fallout between the Philippines and Singapore. Sarah Balabagan meanwhile was an under-aged migrant who falsified her documents and age in order to work as a domestic helper in the United Arab Emirates. On July 19, 1994 she killed her 85-year-old male employer in an attempt to protect herself from rape. Although initially sentenced to 7 years of imprisonment and death by firing squad, international pressure and protest movements following Contemplacion's execution, led charges against her to be dropped, thus returning to the Philippines to a heroine's welcome.

for its citizens and the genuine sharing of benefits brought by economic development:

> While recognizing the significant contribution of Filipino migrant workers to the national economy through their foreign exchange remittances, the State does not promote overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development. The State, therefore, shall continuously create local employment opportunities and promote the equitable distribution of wealth and the benefits of development (RA 8042 Section 2C).

In order to promote these two central goals of RA 8042, the state adopts a policy of deregulation on various tasks of the state migration apparatus, namely through Section 29 on the Deregulation Plan on Recruitment and Section 30 that aims to phase out its regulatory functions.

While RA 8042 seems to address the needs of the Filipino migrant, deregulation of government agencies has in fact led to the increasing vulnerability of migrants. Ball and Piper argue that although the RA 8042 uses the language of human and labor rights to promote 'a new era' of state consciousness over the need to protect migrant workers, it is in essence contradictory. This is because on the one hand, the Act has as its centerpiece the protection of migrant workers, and on the other hand it promotes the deregulation of the labor export industry, through a winding back of the regulatory functions of the POEA (2002: 1021-22). Central to this argument is the issue of external citizenship, which refers to the right to seek diplomatic assistance and protection by the representatives of a migrant's home country (Baubock as cited in Ball and Piper, 2002). This is reflected with the deregulatory nature of RA 8042's Full Disclosure Policy. This policy in essence transfers the responsibility of protection to the personal sphere of the migrant. The POEA states this quite clearly:

> While government shall ensure that workers have the fullest information on their overseas contracts and working conditions, the migrant workers and their families make the final decisions in undertaking overseas employment. There are workers though who despite advisories and warning, proceed with dangerous and illegal foreign employment (As cited in Tyner 2000: 149).

Although the provision of full disclosure has ironically led to the further marginalization and weakening of the migrant external citizenship rather than the stated purpose of migrant protection under RA 8042, the growing discourse of migrant protection has continued well up to the end of the Estrada government as exemplified by the portrayal of migrant Filipinos as *Juan Kaunlaran* (John Progress), an empowered,

globally competitive migrant worker (Tyner 2000: 148).

#### 3.2.1.4. Migration as Explicit Development Policy under Arroyo and the Global Filipino (2001-2010)

With President Arroyo's ascension to power through the second EDSA revolution of 2001, she inherited the country's existing deregulated migration infrastructure and the discourse of migration as part of globalization. While the Ramos period saw labor migration not to be pursued as a development policy, as stated in Republic Act 8042, the Arroyo administration followed an opposite course. Not only does it explicitly pursue the export of labor as stated with its goal of deploying one million OFWs every year (MTPDP 2004: Intro-2), it has adjusted its economic and foreign policy to suit its migration thrust. Due to the changing global market and growing demand for white-collar labor, the government's overseas employment program may be described as becoming more aggressive in its pursuit of labor migration as a development strategy. Thus overseas employment became a major part of President Arroyo's poverty alleviation program (MTPDP 2004:1-Chapter 9) and was also considered as the "pillar of the government's foreign policy" (De Castro 2010). Central to the return of pre-RA 8042 migration policy is the massive marketing and promotion of the potential of white-collar labor especially in the health and service sector, catering to East Asia and European graying societies.

This rhetoric of the promise of white-collar labor is reflected in the newly "reformed" POEA. Since the Arroyo period, the POEA stressed the marked shift in the quality of workers that they send abroad. A good case study for this would be the signing of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) provision on the Movement of Natural Persons. This includes provisions on the eventual migration of white-collar labor into Japan such as IT and health care workers. Labor Attaché of the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo Reydeluz D. Conferido describes the government's hope that the eventual ratification of the JPEPA would usher a new era for Philippine labor deployment.

Furthermore, the promise of white-collar jobs is highlighted when the government states that the supply for skilled workers is not enough to meet global

demand. POEA deputy administrator Hans Leo Cacdac mentions that while the country can readily fill up service and production jobs, there aren't enough adequately trained Filipinos to meet the demand for skilled workers and professionals. These hard-to-fill overseas posts include nurses in specialized areas, math and science teachers, engineers, and other highly skilled workers for petrochemical and heavy industries. "Given such a scenario and in order to maximize the job opportunities in the overseas labor markets, it is critical that the Philippines, as a labor-supplying state, assure its continuous foothold in the global market by ensuring a consistent supply of highly qualified technical workers" (PDI 2006). Through such statements, the government is using state rhetoric that reflects its labor migration policies. As such Arroyo's migration policies have shifted from being oriented towards 'homeland policies,' where sending states create institutions aimed at orienting migrants towards return, into 'global nation policies,' where sending states seek to encourage migrants to stay abroad but stay in touch (Smith as cited in Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003).

Finally it was in the context of the Arroyo administration's policy of explicitly using migration as a development policy and its goal of sending a million new migrants for annually reached in 2004 that the discourse of the Global Filipino grew forth. At first glance, the Global Filipino can be seen as an obvious discourse used to promote official nationalism. However, in closer analysis, we can see that although Arroyo alluded to the presence and contributions of the Global Filipino, this discourse was not a state-created term, unlike that of the *Balikbayan* or the *Bagong Bayani*. Rather, it grew naturally from the various mass media organizations, the various migrant groups throughout the world and organically came to symbolize the inclusion of the cosmopolitan Filipino, may it be contractual or permanent. Furthermore, the birth of the Global Filipino coincided with the growing dissonance of the discourse of the transnational guilt. Indeed, the Global Filipinos are seen as cosmopolitan sojourners, which can easily adopt and blend in multiple settings and contexts. As such, it is the Global Filipino discourse, which initially was used to promote official nationalism came to embody the congruence and synthesis of the three main diaspora nationalisms.

### 3.3. Analysis and Summary

#### 3.3.1. Migrant Discourses and Diaspora Nationalism

After discussing the various typologies of diaspora nationalism and the logic behind them by exploring the political economy and discourses of migration, several relevant questions should be discussed. As in any narrative or discourse, its origin and who initiated it is often asked. While this might seem important, the more relevant question should not be the who and when, but rather the how. In discussing how these narratives and discourses are promoted, the previous section has clearly shown that these discourses are interpreted and promoted differently depending on the social actor involved, whether it be the state, advocacy groups or migrants themselves. Although there will be some overlap and common positions, some general trends and themes can be discerned.

Regarding the *Balikbayan*, the state initially promoted this discourse as a means to maintain ties to overseas Filipinos. Through narratives of patriotism, official nationalism ask the *Balikbayan* to support the homeland through their tourism dollars and at the same time, prop up the image of the Marcos regime. For advocacy groups meanwhile, they were seen as the Ugly *Balikbayan*, representing the values of the imperialist US and worst of all, they are seen as unpatriotic since they have already turned their backs to the country and contributed to the problems of brain drain. Of course, the views on the *Balikbayan* also changes through time, as seen when some advocacy groups are actively targetting *Balikbayan* organizations in the US and Europe to support diaspora philanthropy projects in the homeland. For the migrants meanwhile, they themselves view the *Balikbayan* as simply the migrant group who had made it big in reaching the American dream. Indeed, as will be discussed in the next chapters, OFWs who have worked in Hong Kong and Japan and even for some who have developed roots to their adopted host communities, they still long for the chance to go to the US, either through step-migration or by having their next generation of migrants be lucky enough to migrate to the US and wait for them to be petitioned for their final reunification to the US.[39]

[39] A good case is the story related by Rey Ventura, a former undocumented worker in Japan who after returning legally to Japan and working as a journalist, visited his former workmate. His friend, who after toiling in Japan for many years, has now migrated to the US

In discussing the *Bagong Bayani* discourse meanwhile, just the phrasing of the OFWs as heroes already implies the role of the state in promoting official nationalism, in this case, by praising the sacrifice and the resolve of these labor migrants to support not only their families, but the state which has become dependent to the foreign reserves and revenues from remittances. The discourse of the *Bagong Bayani* has been so accepted and integrated to the larger Philippine social life that being an OFW is already synonymous to being a *Bagong Bayani*. Indeed the state continues to perpetuate the discourse of migrant heroism through various programs directed toward them, such as the *Bagong Bayani* awards and through promoting mass media images extolling their virtues and sacrifices. Meanwhile for migrant activists and advocacy groups, they argue that the OFWs are not heroes, but rather are martyrs. They argue that since the state constantly exploits these migrants, doesn't offer genuine alternative work opportunities in the homeland and above all are impotent to offer protection labor migrants working in tough conditions, then it is only fit for these OFWs to be seen as martyrs instead. By turning the discourse of migrant heroism to martyrdom, these activists have turned the *Bagong Bayani* discourse into its head and made the *Bagong Bayani* discourse into an alternative nationalist image opposite from the official pronouncements of the state.

While the interplay and dialectics behind the interpretation of the *Bagong Bayani* and *Balikbayan* are being fought between the state and civil society groups, it would be interesting instead to have a closer look into how migrants and their families back home view these discourses and narratives. As we have explained in the previous sections, the main characteristic of demotic nationalism is not their specific views and positions on key positions and themes regarding migration policy debates nor on positioning themselves as either being pro or anti-state. Rather, the main defining feature of demotic nationalism is how migrants themselves negotiate and interpret these discourse for themselves, based on their own experiences, concerns and values. Exhibiting pragmatism, most migrants view being a *Balikbayan* and a *Bagong Bayani* as favorable, in that they contribute to the betterment of their families, home communities and the national economy. While this may be the case, on the other hand, they also

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when daughter got a nursing position in the US (2007). This experience of step-migration will be discussed further in the succeeding chapters.

become critical on the lack of protection accorded to them and the state not keeping keep its promise to offer long-term economic development and employment opportunities back home. This is exhibited on how migrants have worked together to support the passing of the Republic Act 8042 or the Magna Carta for Migrants, Republic Act 9189 or the Overseas Absentee Voting Act of 2003 and the ever important Republic Act 9225 or the Citizenship Retention and Re-Acquisition Act of 2003 (commonly known as the Dual-Citizenship bill). Examples of these pragmatic positions and opinions on key issues will be discussed and highlighted further in the succeeding chapters.

After analyzing what the *Balikbayan* and *Bagong Bayani* discourses mean for the state, advocacy and migrants according to the various diaspora nationalisms, the next section will analyze and explore what the Global Filipino discourse stand for and how it is theoretically and substantially different from its predecessors.

### 3.3.2. Reimagining the Nation and the Global Filipino

As mentioned in the previous section, the discourse of the Global Filipino coincided with the intensification of migration under Arroyo's policy of labor migration as an explicit development policy. Indeed, during this period, Filipino migrants were tauted as being Global Filipinos - cosmopolitan, highly skilled and through their contributions, they can help develop the homeland through various investment and development programs. While at first glance the discourse of Global Filipino seems to promote official nationalism and the migration policies of the state, closer analysis shows that being a Global Filipino also means something different for different groups. While the state sees the Global Filipino as helping the country by being Overseas Filipino Investors (OFI), some advocacy groups and activisits are critical on how migration and development initiatives are being promoted towards the Global Filipino as a smokescreen for genuine development and radical reform in the homeland.

For migrants meanwhile, being labelled as a Global Filipino also has subjective meanings attached to it. For the newer generation of labor migrants, especially those who are highly-skilled and are quick to take advantage of the new labor markets across the world, being a Global Filipino represents a breakaway from the old narrative of transnational guilt, namely that their migration decision is unpatriotic and causes brain

drain. Indeed, these savvy migrants see their journey as a positive and pragmatic option which can help not only their personal well being (through self-actualization and avoiding problems of underemployment back home) and their family's finances but above all, help the nation through diaspora philanthropy. Indeed, one of the selling points behind the Global Filipino discourse is that its unabashed cosmopolitanism promises not only financial rewards but above all, protection in lieu of their sought after high skills and chances for permanent migration and settlement. While the Global Filipino promises such rewarding possibilities, there is also possibilities of backlash in the future. Similar to how *Balikbayans* often look down on their OFW counterparts due to their vulnerability, and bringing shameful images of what proud skilled migrants ought to be, the discourse and narratives behind the Global Filipinos are beginning to drive a wedge between white collar and blue collar workers. This process, although still not much researched by migration scholars, unfortunately seems to perpetuates the snobbery on OFWs and reproducing the discourses and concerns of transnational shame of these Global Filipino migrants.[40]

Another aspect on the Global Filipino discourse is the emergence of a expansive, deterritorialized, and inclusive national identity. Indeed, one the main impacts of the Global Filipino discourse is that not only the migrants view themselves as being Global Filipinos, but even Filipinos in the homeland are forced to reevaluate their own perceptions and ideas on who and what is the Filipino. As shown in the previous sections and the literature review on chapter two, being a Global Filipino includes not only 1st generation, but also 2nd and 3rd generation of migrants which above all represent Filipino national identity irrespective of where they are residing or have settled. In this sense, the Global Filipino identity is based on Filipino national identity, Filipinoness and shared lived experiences.

Furthermore, another aspect worth discussing is how the Global Filipino discourse can be seen as a clear manifestation and proof of demotic nationalism by

[40] Although this process seems to be on the rise, not much studies have been accorded to it. While San Jose (2008) discusses the prospects of this Global Filipino snobbery, various anecdotal evidence and journalistic report seem to express this phenomenon especially in countries wherein both skilled white-collar and blue collar Filipino migrants work side by side, namely in Hong Kong, Singapore and to some extent in Japan.

migrants. As shown in the previous discussions, the Global Filipino discourse represents how the Filipino migrants have already gone beyond the narratives of transnational shame and guilt which are the main narratives promoted by official and alternative nationalisms. These will be discussed further and will be proven further in the succeeding chapters of case studies in Hong Kong, Japan and development projects by migrants in the homeland.

In the final analysis, while contending diaspora nationalisms exists, what this process has brought forth is the melding of diaspora nationalisms. Indeed, the succeeding chapters will show that as a consequence of the intermingling and interplay of these diaspora nationalism, then the ultimate symbol of nationalism - the Filipino nation - is by itself is also being reimagined as a totally new entity. This reimagined nation, the Global Filipino nation, is being reimagined as deterritorialized, which is not based on formal citizenship or nationalistic ideological persuasions, but above all on the shared lived experiences of being a migrant, of being part of the diaspora and the larger Global Filipino community.

In summary, this chapter has shown the context of diaspora nationalism, its main typologies and theoretical discussions. The chapter then proceeded to explain the logic behind diaspora nationalisms and how they are perpetuated and promoted through the structure of the political economy and discourses of migration. Lastly, it has also shown that the intermingling of the diaspora nationalisms has led to the reimagining of the Filipino nation itself as a demotic Global Filipino nation.

After discussing the main research questions, thesis arguments, theoretical framework in chapter one, the main literature gaps in chapter two and diaspora nationalisms and discourses in chapter three, this dissertation will proceed to the main case study chapters which explores how diaspora nationalism is promoted, exhibited, practiced in Hong Kong, Japan and development projects in the Philippine homeland.

## Chapter Four
## Revisiting Hong Kong: Migrant Advocacy as Sites of Contending Diaspora Nationalisms

The previous chapters has set the ground work for this thesis by discussing the main research questions, main arguments and theoretical frameworks to analyze the dynamics of diaspora nationalism among Filipinos in East Asia. Particularly, chapters have shown the main literature gaps on studies regarding Filipino migration and nationalism. Chapter three then provides an in-depth theorizing behind the typologies of diaspora nationalisms and proceeds to show how diaspora nationalism was conceptualized and promoted by the state and advocacy groups in order to reach out towards migrants. While this may be the case, migrants also had their own negotiated understanding and practice of demotic nationalisms.

While the first three chapters of this thesis lays the theoretical and conceptual groundwork on diaspora nationalism and the reimagining of the nation, chapters four to six will focus on the main case studies that show how the social actors on the ground, particularly on how the migrants themselves understand and practice diaspora nationalism and how this in turn leads to the reimaging of the Filipino nation.

Much literature have already discussed the dynamics of migrant advocacy activities among foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong, particularly on the large role of Filipino migrant workers and activists, much on the analysis have focused on migrant governance models or the dynamics of inter-ethnic and inter-organizational migrant advocacy. This chapter aims to analyze and explore Filipino migrant activism through the lens of diaspora nationalism, particularly on the changing trends of alternative nationalism and demotic nationalism in Hong Kong. By exploring how contending diaspora nationalisms shape Filipino migrant advocacy movement in Hong Kong, this chapter aims to frame this issue within the broader changes of diaspora nationalism as practiced and understood in East Asia and the Philippines.

This chapter will first establish the context of Hong Kong as being a "good place to protest" for migrant rights and how it became a hotbed for migrant activism across the

Filipino diaspora. Second, this chapter will explore the main social actors involved in migrant advocacy issues in Hong Kong, namely that of the state, advocacy groups, and migrant themselves. Describing in detail the dynamics between the major social actors and through this process, this section will also highlight the primacy of demotic nationalism. This chapter will then conclude by analyze the main trends from the case studies and discussing its implications to the larger Filipino diaspora and how it has led to the reimagining of the Philippine homeland.

### 4.1. Establishing the Context: Hong Kong for Migrants

Hong Kong is known as a global capitalist city, self-proclaimed to be "Asia's World City" and a "poster child for world trade" (Constable 2009). In describing a global city, Saskia Sassen defines it as involving not only the movement of capital, but also the movement of a transnational workforce, "both rich, i.e. the new transnational professional workforce, and poor, i.e. most migrant workers; and it is a space for the transmigration of cultural forms, for the reterritorialization of 'local' subcultures" (2001). Indeed, although Hong Kong follows the policy model of differential exclusion, which is defined as accepting immigrants only within strict and functional limits (Castles 2004), it is known as a "good place to protest" (Sim 2009, Kuah-Pearce and Guiheux 2009) and quite accommodating to migrants rights. Explaining why Hong Kong offers better working conditions particularly for migrant domestic workers, Ogaya mentions the two main reasons are: aspects of labor conditions such as minimum wage, holidays, and procedures for contract trouble are ensured by labor law, and migrant workers are allowed to join labor unions or establish them (2004: 385).

While Hong Kong is already known for its advancement of migrant rights, it too holds a special place for Filipino migrant activist and is known as the "cradle of political OFW advocacy" (Rother 2009: 124). Due to its adoption of differential exclusion, Filipino migrants follow a path of "permanent temporary migration", in which domestic workers to renew their two-year contracts several times, interrupted by stays of various lengths in the Philippines. Thus, this form of continuous circular migration, can be seen as a contributing factor to the construction of an increasingly dense transnational political space – wherein the politics in the home country and the destination of migration are at all times highly intertwined (Rother 2009: 131).

Filipino migrants started arriving in Hong Kong during the late 1970s as a product of both push and pull factors: push factors being the chronic underemployment at the Philippines coupled with the government's aggressive policies of migration export and the pull factors of Hong Kong's demand for foreign domestic helpers. While Hong Kong already had a tradition of hiring local Chinese as domestic helpers, initially Filipino domestic helpers arrived in the island to work for foreign expatriate families, rather than the local Hong Kong families due to their English language skills. Due to changing socio-demographic factors, local Chinese domestic helpers demanded higher pay or moved on to other jobs. It was during this period that the hiring of Filipino migrants increased, coinciding with the larger trends of Filipino feminized migration in Asia. As demand for foreign domestic helpers increased, other ethnic migrants groups from Southeast and South Asia entered the migrant labor force. Other than making up the largest majority among migrant groups, Filipino migrants arguably also occupy the highest social status, commanding higher salaries and benefits, mainly due to their position as pioneer migrants, the outcomes of migrant advocacy campaigns and their command of the English language. Furthermore, studies have shown that a substantial number of Filipino migrants come from better education backgrounds and as such, also teach English language and school tutoring to their households, commanding their more privileged position (Ogaya 2004).[41]

[41] David mentions that a substantial number of Filipino domestic workers are professionals and white collar in the Philippines, such as teachers, government workers, etc. (2002: 43).

**Table 4.1. Foreign Domestic Workers in Hong Kong by Nationality, 1997-2009**

| | Philippines | Indonesia | Thailand | Others | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1997 | 138,100 | 24,700 | 5,100 | 3,100 | 171,000 |
| 1998 | 140,500 | 31,800 | 5,300 | 3,000 | 180,600 |
| 1999 | 143,200 | 41,400 | 5,760 | 3,340 | 193,700 |
| 2000 | 151,490 | 55,200 | 6,450 | 3,650 | 216,790 |
| 2001 | 155,450 | 68,880 | 7,000 | 3,950 | 235,280 |
| 2002 | 148,390 | 78,170 | 6,670 | 3,880 | 237,110 |
| 2003 | 130,760 | 73,870 | 5,690 | 3,590 | 213,910 |
| 2004 | 119,710 | 90,050 | 4,920 | 3,750 | 218,430 |
| 2005 | 118,030 | 96,900 | 4,510 | 3,760 | 223,200 |
| 2006 | 120,790 | 104,130 | 4,290 | 3,570 | 232,780 |
| 2007 | 123,550 | 114,410 | 4,070 | 3,500 | 245,530 |
| 2008 | 125,943 | 123,341 | 3,820 | 3,493 | 256,597 |
| 2009 | 130,252 | 130,759 | 3,862 | 3,599 | 268,472 |

Source: Compiled from various data sources, namely from the MFA (2004: 20), and the Hong Kong Immigration Department, Office of Communications and Public Affairs.

While Filipino migrants still make up the majority of domestic helpers and still enjoy more favorable work conditions than other migrant groups, significant changes have been noticed since the 2000's. Nicole Constable, who has done several studies on foreign domestic helpers through the years, takes note of the recent trends, primary among them was the 1) phenomenal increase in the number of Indonesian domestic workers; 2) the proliferation of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), unions, and grassroots associations focused on migrant worker issues; and lastly 3) the wider scope of domestic worker's political protests that were now defined mainly in terms of broader human rights, in contrast to the more narrowly defined labor issues that were the main concerns of the early and mid 1990s (2009: 148).

### 4.1.1. Migrant Advocacy Networks in Hong Kong

After discussing the context and changing trends of foreign migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong, it is important to describe further the features of its migrant advocacy networks. In his research describing political activism among migrant Filipinos, Rother cites that unlike many countries where "concerned citizens" from the destination society play a vital role in the establishment of migrant support organizations, Hong Kong organizations have been to a large extent founded and developed by migrants themselves or by Filipino activists (2009: 126). Furthermore, while migrant support organizations also interact with local Hong Kong civil society,

especially in solidarity campaigns with labor unions (Alcid 2006), most of their campaign works are independently organized. In fact, there had been studies showing how Filipino migrant activists themselves has had a positive impact with local Hong Kong civil society as they are socialized about protest organizing by their Filipino counterparts (Constable 2009).

Another salient feature of Hong Kong's migrant advocacy networks is the strong interaction and cooperation between the various migrant organizations from different nationalities. Previous migration studies in Asia suggest that as a result of competition among different nation-states and various labor brokers, migrants from different nationalities are often divided rather than united in their host societies. Indeed, Piper suggests that the problem with ethnic-specific activism, as done by many NGOs, is that one nationality emerges as better protected. For example, Filipino migrants tend to be better protected than other migrant groups, but it results in employers replacing them with workers of other nationalities who are less rights-conscious and less well organized. As such, she argues that solidarity has to be trans-ethnic and thus, trans-organizational, with collaboration between NGOs and trade unions being vital (2005: 115). To address this gap, Hsia details how the recent years have seen grassroots migrant organizations from different nationalities come together to challenge capitalist globalization and overcome the divide and rule tactics of brokers and states and form transnational solidarity (2009). Citing the case of the Asian Migration Coordinating Body (AMCB), Hsia shows that Filipino activists are not fighting for more privileged benefits to the detriment of other ethnic migrant groups, rather they help in the socialization of other emerging migrant activists, coming together to fight for common rights and causes. This was exemplified by the case of Eni Lestari, one of the founding members of Association of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Hong Kong (ATKI), who was inspired by their Filipino migrant counterparts to organize them and fight for their rights. "I see how the (Filipino) victims become heroes for themselves! So we Indonesians also felt the need to form an organization for fellow Indonesians" (2009: 131). Thus, since the 2000's have shown that the Philippine migrant advocacy experience are beneficial to other migrants of other nationalities, and that Filipino NGOs are seen as role models in terms of organizational structure and lobby work (Constable 2007:214).

Whereas the above-mentioned trends are noteworthy, it is also quite interesting to explore the extent of how Filipino migrant advocacy strategies are also shared with their other ethnic activist counterparts. Constable mentions that on the level of domestic worker activism, they are increasingly framed in relation to discourses of global justice and human rights (2009: 150). Indeed, while the basis of most migrant activists are oriented toward global justice and human rights in the macro regional level, recent trends have shown that Filipino migrant activists too are sharing their alternative nationalist model to other ethnic activist partners. Rodriguez mentions that Filipino migrant activist have linked together with the Filipino diaspora and sometimes citizens of other countries, not only to expand the economic, political and social rights and privileges of migrants, but to struggle for a new kind of citizenship at home (2002: 355). As they interact with their Filipino counterparts, Indonesian domestic workers involved with ATKI describe their political awakening in Hong Kong and their plans to continue their activism upon return to Indonesia (Constable 2009: 157). Indeed, the dynamics and influences of both the global human rights oriented models and alternative nationalist models will be discussed in the next section.

As shown in this section, much literature has focused on how Hong Kong is seen as a good place to protest through its vibrant migrant advocacy networks and how migrant Filipinos sees it as the cradle of political OFW diplomacy. While this is true, not much literature has focused on the perspective of the migrants themselves, which attempt to go beyond the themes of migrant advocacy networks. The succeeding sections will attempt to do so by exploring the main social actors involved in Filipino migrant advocacy in Hong Kong and the contending diaspora nationalisms that these migrants face in their everyday interactions, both in Hong Kong and in the homeland.

### 4.1.2. Main Social Actors and the Cluster of Migrant Advocacy Groups in Hong Kong

This section will discuss the main social actors involved in migrant advocacy and the practice of diaspora nationalism in Hong Kong. For this chapter, we emphasize three aspects worth mentioning. The first one is the difference between the home and host state. Although Hong Kong is known for its progressive migrant policies, the focus of this research is how the Philippine home state attempts to reach out towards its

migrants. As such, when discussions of the state is mentioned, it usually relates to a discussion of how external citizenship rights are offered to Filipino migrants in Hong Kong through the promise of migrant protection, overseas absentee voting, maximizing remittances and preparations for eventual return or migrant reintegration.

Another aspect worth mentioning is the distinction between the main social actors in diaspora nationalism, namely the state, civil society groups and migrants themselves. As mentioned in the previous chapters, most of the literature on migrant studies in Hong Kong and East Asia in general has focused mainly the actions by the state and civil society groups to reach out to migrants. Whenever discussions are mentioned on the agency of migrants, it usually dwells on how migrants help themselves through the support and services provided by various NGOs and civil society groups. This often overlooked dimension on how migrants themselves exhibit agency by how they negotiate and practice the nationalistic actions directed towards them will be addressed by this chapter by a discussion on demotic nationalism.

The last aspect to be discussed in this section is the presence of parallel migrant civil society groups that are present in Hong Kong. Indeed, in close analysis, these organizations offer similar services and also in broad term work for similar advocacy initiatives. In spite of this, there is a distinction between their strategies and ideological focus. The presence of this cluster has a big effect, not only to the migrant advocacy activities of these organizations in Hong Kong, but also the larger advocacy drives in the East Asian region and the homeland as well. This distinction will be discussed in the next section.

#### 4.1.2.1. Presence of Clusters among Filipino Migrant Advocacy Groups

While many aspects have been discussed on the positive influence and extent of migrant advocacy as pioneered by Filipino migrant networks, there have been studies suggesting that Filipino migrant advocacy groups are not a homogenous group. Constable hints on the presence of two different migrant coalitions, one is the Asian Migration Coordinating Body (AMCB) which is more closely affiliated with other Hong Kong based civil society organizations, and the other being the Asian Migrant Centre (AMC) being more closely allied with other regional and international organizations,

such as the Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) (2009). Although the presence of parallel coalitions might seem a common occurrence in civil society dynamics, research that discuss the impact and reasons behind the divisiveness among the Filipino migrant civil society in Hong Kong have been limited.

In his study on the Filipino migrant networks in Hong Kong, Rother posits that while personal animosities might play a significant role, the difficulties can be ascribed to conflicting agendas and ideological backgrounds among the more than 30 political Filipino NGOs and grassroots organizations. Political cleavages from the home society are mirrored in the migrant society abroad and may be a contributing factor for the divisions among migrant NGOs (2009: 127).

While it seems that both personal and ideological reasons play a factor with the political cleavages among these coalitions, sometimes these organizations explicitly differentiate themselves by criticizing the approach followed by the other group. According to their annual report, the AMC describe their organization as "working to promote the human rights, dignity and empowerment of migrant workers and their families in Asia, so that they are able to assert and defend their rights and interests, and become partners in sustainable, just and gender-fair social development (from AMC website, 2011). On the other hand, in her study exploring the activities of the AMCB, Hsia explains that the distinguishing feature that the AMCB ascribe for themselves is that they are made up of "grassroots migrant organizations" and are not conventional NGOs, who they posit as prone to the pitfalls of being elitist and non-representative (2009: 115). She expounds on this by stating that:

> While many migrant NGOs claim their goals are to "empower" migrants and protect migrants' rights, it is not uncommon for NGOs to "speak on behalf of" migrants and the so-called "empowerment" can thus be more rhetorical than practical. Many studies do not distinguish NGOs from grassroots migrant organizations and often conflate the efforts and achievements of grassroots organizations with those of NGOs (2009: 115).

Although it might be said that the cleavages among these migrant coalitions might be due to personal issues, ideological differences or diverging strategies, the split between these parallel coalitions have lasting effects and implications. Constable mentions that among the domestic helpers, who receive the services and support of

these advocacy coalitions, they often learn that affiliating with one activist organization or network can also alienate them from others. She points out that some of the divides that exist among migrant workers (Indonesians as well as Filipinos) seem to structurally replicate left-wing political fissures in the Philippines (2009:158-159). Meanwhile, in terms of the dealings with both the host and the home society, Rother mentions that the conflicting views of migrant organizations weakens the reputation and influence of civil society when dealing with the government. He notes that while:

> There are consultations between government agencies and migrant NGOs, the question of the legitimacy of the civil society representatives - which NGO rightfully represents - remain unresolved. In addition, grassroots organizations explicitly distance themselves from "NGOism," claiming that migrants be provided with a platform to speak for themselves instead of activists speaking on their behalf (2009: 123).

The split between these groups and its implications to the larger migrant advocacy initiatives in Hong Kong will be discussed in detail in the next sections together with an in-depth discussion on the typologies of their strategies under the practice of alternative nationalism.

### 4.2. The Dynamics of Diaspora Nationalism in Hong Kong

After discussing the context of Filipino migration to Hong Kong and highlighting the roles of the major social actors in migrant advocacy, this section will discuss in detail how the various social actors promote their version of diaspora nationalism, highlighting the dynamics and interplay between these contending diaspora nationalisms. After discussing the typologies and the interactions of these diaspora nationalisms, the later subsection will attempt to discern the future and practice of diaspora nationalisms in Hong Kong and its implications both toward migrant advocacy in Hong Kong and also national /state-building projects in the homeland.

#### 4.2.1. Contending Diaspora Nationalisms

##### 4.2.1.1. Official Nationalism

Whenever the concept of nationalism directed towards migrants is discussed, the state is often seen as being synonymous to nationalism. Indeed, the official nationalism promoted by the state has traditionally been seen as being influential since the advent of state-sponsored labor migration policies since the 1970's. During the Marcos period, the state introduced its policies of "manpower export" as a stopgap solution to

unemployment and massive need for foreign currency. During this period, the Marcos regime initiatives of official nationalism dwelt on two aspects: that of mandatory remittances and how OCWs should behave while working abroad. Since the advent of labor export, Marcos has made remittances mandatory through official state channels through the Executive Order No. 857, which was only successfully removed in the 1980's by the migrant advocacy groups in Hong Kong and in the Philippines. Other than forced remittances, the Marcos regime aimed to maintain its hold of its OCWs through mandatory pre-departure orientation activities which asks the OCWs to be model migrants while away and being good overseas based citizens of the *Bagong Lipunan* (New Society) regime.

While Filipino migration to Hong Kong has already started during the Marcos period, it was only during the Corazon Aquino administration that the flow of Filipino domestic helpers to Hong Kong increased, coinciding with the feminization of migration in the East Asian region. Although problems related to migration have already started to emerge, the Aquino government inherited the state-apparatus of labor export and also its dependency to remittances. As such, it was during this period that the state began to promise better protection to the migrants, mainly by promising protection through better regulation of the migration industry by tackling the issue of illegal recruitment during the pre-deployment stage. Other than aspects related to the political economy of labor migration, the Aquino period saw the beginnings of the use of migrant discourses to promote official nationalism. Indeed, it was President Aquino herself during a visit to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) who welcomed the arrival of the Filipino domestic helper going home for Christmas that she gave a famous speech thanking the hard work and sacrifices of the migrants. Championing the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) as the *Bagong Bayani* (Modern-Day Hero), this discourse has become synonymous to the multitude of contractual labor migrants leaving and coming home every year. This call for nostalgia for the homeland and the promotion of the Filipino value of hard work for love of family has always been a constant theme directed toward the Filipino migrant and their families at home.

As the succeeding administrations went by, there were several changes to the state's migration policies, but the overall dependence to remittances and the increase in

migrant deployment has not changed. Indeed during the Ramos administration (1992-1998), the country experienced a succession of controversial migrant incidents which highlight the state's weakness in offering migrant protection while they are working abroad, the state reacted by passing the Republic Act (RA) 8042 or the so called Magna Carta for Overseas Filipinos.[42] This law promised that the state and its agencies will prioritize the plight and welfare of Filipino migrants and explicitly stated that the state will move beyond labor migration as a policy for economic development. Coinciding with the promise of protection is the promise of the state to work closely with various migrant civil society groups to better work for the protection and plight of migrant workers abroad.

While the Ramos administration passed RA 8042 and prioritized protection and economic development in the homeland, the Arroyo administration broke away from the previous policies and pursued an explicitly migrant remittance led economic development plan. Calling for the deployment of a million labor migrants (which the state reached in 2004), Arroyo pursued labor migration as an explicit economic policy by making the promotion and protection of Filipino labor as a cornerstone of her foreign policy agenda. Furthermore, she promised better protection and conditions for migrants by aggressively seeking new labor markets, particularly of white-collar jobs and health care work in the East Asian region. Other than her policies of seeking white collar jobs for Filipinos, she also directed several initiatives to improve the skills of migrants, following the logic that even blue collar workers such as domestic helpers can receive better conditions, salaries and protection through job and skills improvement. This was evidenced by her "Super-Maid" program, which offered additional caregiving, language, emergency first-aid and other skills for domestic workers so that their work would resemble caregivers rather than the traditional domestic helper workload (Bulatlat 2006). These policies and programs were promoted through the discourse of the Global Filipino, which calls for migrants to be more cosmopolitan, skillful and through their better work opportunities and conditions, promise to help the country through their remittances and diaspora philanthropy initiatives.

[42] These events included the controversial deaths and imprisonment of several Filipina migrants in different labor destinations, namely the death of Maricris Sioson in Japan, the arrest and execution of Flor Contemplacion in Singapore, and the arrest of under-aged Sarah Balabagan in the Middle East. These events are further discussed in chapter three of this dissertation.

In summing up the main initiatives and policies of the state to promote official nationalism in Hong Kong, it is quite clear that the thrust of the state oriented toward the promotion of external citizenship rights for the migrants. This is culminated in the promise of better protection (through its various laws, migrant shelters, working with service oriented NGOs), better opportunities back home (through reintegration schemes) while at the same time, continually reaching out to the migrants to maintain links to the homeland through its remittances policies, migrant investment schemes and overseas absentee voting programs. Indeed, while the state has continually focused and promised migrant protection, leading some government to follow the Philippine state's migration deployment and protection policies, most civil society organizations are still critical to the state. For these organizations, they view the state as being largely reactive, rather than pro-active in their work for migrant protection. The criticisms and the views of migrant advocacy groups regarding the state's economic agenda to promote labor migration and migration and development programs will be discussed in detail in the next section.

#### 4.2.1.2. Alternative Nationalism

After discussing the role of official nationalism to promote the state's policies and uphold its interest towards migrants, this section will discuss how civil society groups, are promoting an alternative version of nationalism that is critical of the state's policies and promotes its own vision of another Philippine political society. These civil society are made up of several types of organizations, from advocacy groups, service-oriented NGOs, church groups, hometown associations (HTA), and so-called "grassroots organizations". Other that discussing the typologies and in-group dynamics of these civil society groups, this section will also explain the presence of two parallel "cluster" of civil society organizations which reflect the sub-types of alternative nationalism and the ideological split in the political civil society in the Philippines as well. In this section, we will discuss how the migrant civil society in Hong Kong has become the main arena where the contending ideological beliefs and diverging advocacy strategies of the RA and RD cluster are being played out. This section will show that in terms of advocacy and political mobilization, the RA cluster seems to be more "dominant", while the RD cluster meanwhile is considered more "mainstream" and has a larger clout in the

regional level advocacy for migrant rights. Other than showing the differences between these groups, this section will highlight how their contending views are directed towards the Filipino migrants and consequently, set the stage for their own negotiated practice of demotic nationalism.

**A. Defining the Two Clusters: Typologies and Ideal types**

In order to properly describe the characteristics and point out the differences of the strategies pursued by the two Filipino migrant advocacy clusters in Hong Kong, it would be appropriate to categorize the member organizations by categories. The first category of organizations are what we can describe as overseas Filipino groups who are non-political and are a part of associational civil society (Quimpo 2008:95). This includes ideal-types used by Opiniano in his survey of overseas Filipino organizations (2005:231). Some of the sub-types of organizations include: hometown associations, informal and non-registered organizations, professional organizations, community-base organizations, non-profits, foundations and charities, etc. The second category meanwhile is what we can refer to as "migrant advocacy organizations" or organizations that offer "services with advocacy" toward the migrants.[43] This study posits several ideal types, which were formulated during the fieldwork data-gathering period. These include organizations such as: migrant NGOs, trade and labor unions, grassroots organizations, political parties, umbrella coalitions and migrant alliances.

[43] Ceradoy of the APMM explain that their migrant advocacy activities together with offering services and support to migrants in need. This system of offering "services with advocacy" makes their organizations relevant and shows that they are genuinely concerned for the migrants' plight and needs. Interview with Ceradoy 2009.

**Table 4.2. Typologies and Ideal-Types of Filipino and other Ethnic Migrant Organizations in Hong Kong**

| Types of Overseas Filipino groups / Associational Civil Society | Types of Migrant Advocacy Organizations |
|---|---|
| Informal and not registered[44]<br>Hometown Associations (HTA)<br>Community based organizations<br>Professional organizations<br>Non-Profits/ Foundations and Charities<br>Alumni Associations<br>Other types – i.e. church groups and other associational civil society organizations | Umbrella Coalition<br>Migrant Alliance<br>HK / Migrant Trade Union<br>Migrant NGOs<br>Migrant Worker Unions / "Grassroots Organizations"<br>Hometown Associations (HTA) [45]<br>Supranational Filipino Migrant Groups<br>Migration and Development / Reintegration<br>Philippine Political Parties / Party-list<br>Church Groups |

Source: Table prepared by the author.

Other than discussing the categories and ideal-types of these migrant civil society organizations, data gathered during fieldwork visits from May to June and December 2009 show that such clusters are multi-level, multi-stranded and straddles various geographic boundaries, from purely being either Hong Kong or Philippine based, both based in Hong Kong and the Philippines, and those organizations which are regional in nature.

[44] Most formal migrant organizations are either registered to the Philippine consulate or under the Hong Kong Society ordinance. In particular, foreign organizations need to be registered to the Hong Kong Society ordinance, which is under the jurisdiction of the police department, in order to get permits for public gatherings, events and other formal fund raising activities.

[45] While church groups and hometown associations are traditionally seen as non-political and are not migrant advocacy organizations, nevertheless there are certain church groups and hometown associations that explicitly consider themselves as migrant advocacy organizations.

**Table 4.3. Multi-level and multi-stranded migrant civil society in Hong Kong**

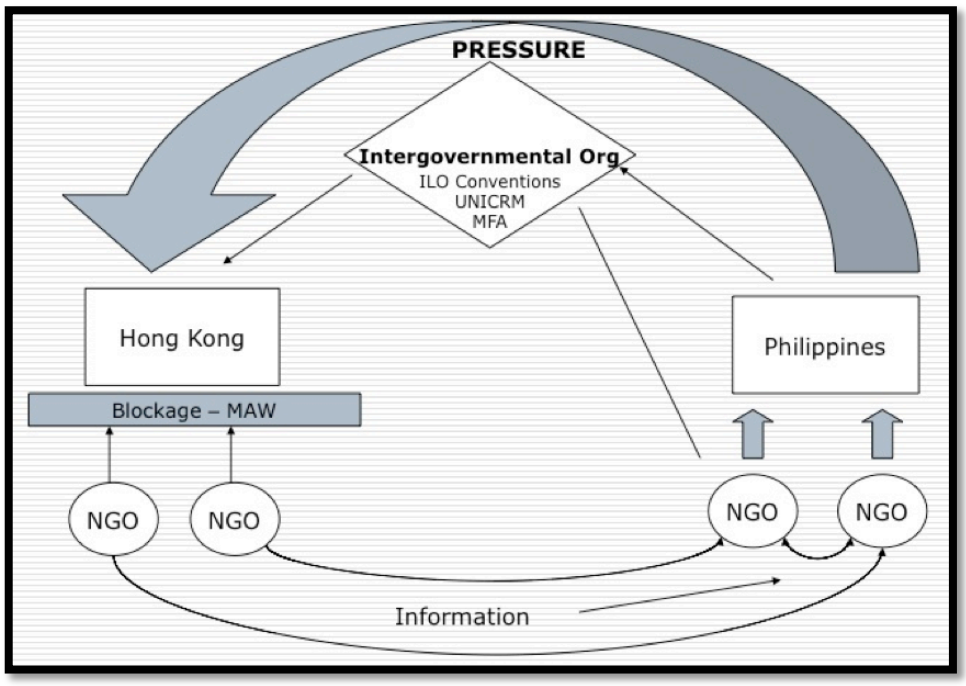
| Cluster | Radical Democratic Perspective (RD) | Revolutionary Approach (RA) | Level of Operations |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Umbrella Coalition** | Asian Migrant Centre (AMC) | Asian Migrants' Coordinating Body (AMCB) | Asia-based |
| **Migrant Alliance** | Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)<br>Asian Domestic Workers Alliance (ADWA) | International Migrants Alliance (IMA)<br>Asia-Pacific Research Network (APRN) | Asia-based |
| **HK Trade Unions** | Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU) | Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU) | Hong Kong-based |
| **Migrant Trade Unions** | Federation of Asian Domestic Workers' Union (FADWU) | Federation of Asian Domestic Workers' Union (FADWU)<br>Overseas Domestic Workers Union (ODWU) | Hong Kong-based |
| **Migrant NGOs** | | Mission for Migrant Workers (MFMW)<br>Bethune House | Hong Kong-based |
| **Migrant Workers Union / "Grassroots Organizations"** | Filipino Domestic Workers Union (FDWU)<br>Indonesian Migrant Workers Union (IMWU)<br>Thai Migrant Workers Union (TMWU)<br>Union of Nepalese Domestic Workers (UNDW)<br>Hong Kong Domestic Workers General Union (HKDGWU) | Filipino Migrant Worker's Union (FMWU)<br>Asosiasi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia (ATKI-HK)<br>Thai Regional Alliance<br>United Filipinos in Hong Kong (UNIFIL) | Both based in Hong Kong and Home Country |
| | Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL) | | Philippine-based |
| **HTA** | | United Pangasinans in Hong Kong (UPHK)<br>Cordillera Alliance (CORALL)<br>Abra Tingulan Ilocano Society (ATIS) | Both based in Hong Kong and Home Country |
| **Supranational Filipino Migrant Groups** | Center for Migrant's Advocacy (CMA) | Asia-Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM)<br>Migrante International | Philippine-based or Philippine oriented |
| **Migration and Development / Reintegration** | AMC - MSAI for CDR<br>Asian Migrant Credit Union (AMCU) | | Asia-based |
| | Unlad Kabayan | | Philippine-based |
| **Philippine Political Parties / Party-list** | Akbayan | Migrante International<br>Gabriela<br>Makabayan Coalition (National Democracy parties) | Philippine-based |
| **Church Groups** | | Diocesan Pastoral Center for Filipinos (DPCF)<br>Philippine Independent Church (PIC)<br>Jesus is Lord Church (JIL) | Philippine-based |

Source: Compiled from 2009 fieldwork data.

**B. Diverging Strategy by the Clusters**

Although the split among the two clusters of migrant organizations have yet to be given formal designations by other migrant scholars in Hong Kong, I shall refer to them as either being under the Revolutionary Approach (RA) or the Radical Democratic Perspective (RD). This study posits this terminology based on the specific strategy and diaspora nationalist character that shapes such organizations. While both clusters show parallelisms and exhibit repetition of activities, the strategies they pursue and the focus of their advocacy substantially differs. The RD cluster is qualitatively more regional-oriented, in which most of their discussions for migrant rights always refer to the need for better regional standards and respect for human rights, and work towards migration governance by states or supra-national institutions, which Piper defines as "governance from above" (2003:29). Furthermore, I argue that this cluster follows the transnational advocacy network (TAN) strategy as originally conceptualized by Keck and Sikkink, which they define as: "when channels between the state and its domestic actors are blocked, NGOs (within host and home state) bypass their state and directly search out international allies to try to bring pressure on their states from the outside" (1998:12).

**Figure 4.1. Transnational Advocacy Network (TAN) strategy of the RD Cluster**



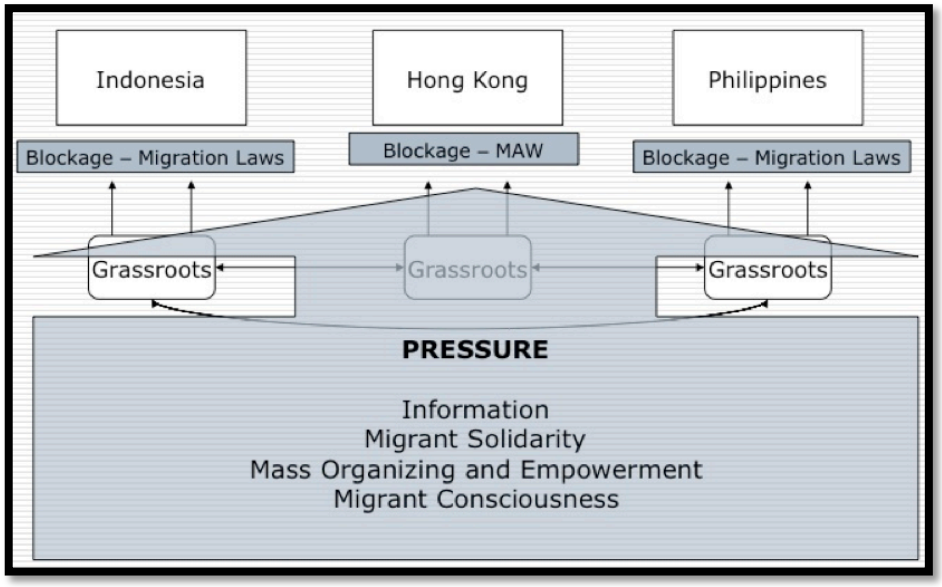

Source: Boomerang Strategy from Keck and Sikkink (1998) and modified by the author.

Figure 4.4 above shows how the "governance from above" approach employed by the RD cluster follows a TAN strategy, or what is also known as the "boomerang effect" as conceptualized by Keck and Sikkink (1998). A good example would be the advocacy by the RD cluster to campaign for the reform of the Minimum Allowable Wage (MAW) law in Hong Kong. During the campaign by the AMC to appeal for the reform of the MAW law, which decreased the minimum wage of domestic workers due to the financial crisis brought by the Leigh man Shock during the late 2000's, their calls for the increase of the MAW was "blocked" due to the conservative stance of the Hong Kong Legislative Council during this period. As such, instead of campaigning endlessly in the Hong Kong side, the AMC together with its coalition partners in the region linked up and shared relevant information and advocacy materials with each other. Through the interaction of the AMC and their regional partners, such as the Philippine-based Center for Migrant's Advocacy (CMA), the AMC can potentially pressure the Philippines to then turn their advocacy toward international and regional bodies. Through the build up of NGOs and advocacy groups in other countries in the region, they can then build enough pressure and momentum for the international bodies governing international labor and migrant laws (such as the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Labor Conventions, the campaigns based from the 1990 United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrants and Members of Their Families (UNICRM) and the Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), the regional-level advocacy arm of the AMC, to then convince Hong Kong to assent to the AMC's advocacy for migrant law reform. This roundabout method or the "boomerang effect" reflects the regional oriented campaign strategy of the AMC.

Compared with the approach by the RD cluster, the Revolutionary Approach (RA) cluster is more state-centered. Their point of contention is not about working for better regional laws and migration governance, but rather aims toward the promotion of self-governance and empowerment of marginalized migrant groups, which is referred to as “governance from below” (Piper 2003:29). Furthermore, I argue that this cluster is shaped by Alternative Nationalist ideology (which is rooted in the National Democratic movement and ideology of the Philippine Left) as defined by Rodriguez as: “not a call merely for enfranchisement, or asserting migrants' human rights which some scholars and NGOs have argued become a critical source of protection of migrants as

they work overseas, but rather it is a critique of the state, compliant with the demands of global capital, that has created the very conditions for migration" (2002: 354).

**Figure 4.2. State-Centered / ND strategy of the Revolutionary Approach (RA) Cluster**




Source: Prepared by the author.

One of the main differences between the RA and RD cluster is the focus of their strategies. While the RD cluster campaigns for migrant reform through international level linkages and a boomerang effect through the larger international level migration law bodies, the RA follows a more state-centric approach. Indeed, although the RA cluster also works in international level campaigns, their goal is achieved not through a boomerang effect from above, but rather a coordinated advocacy campaigns along all migrant sending nation fronts. Following an alternative nationalism strategy (which is based on the ND movement from the Philippines), the key factor for this strategy is the state. Viewing the state as weak and compliant to the demands of global capital, which in turn led to the very conditions for migration (Rodriguez 2002: 354), the RA cluster will campaign for migrant rights directed towards the receiving or host-state. While this is an important component for the overall campaign, the main pressure and criticism is directed not toward the migrant receiving nations' policies, but rather the home state for deciding to send migrants abroad, instead of focusing on job-creation and economic development at home. Taking the case of the advocacy for migrant wage campaigns, the RA cluster through its international umbrella coalition, the Asian Migrants'

Coordinating Body (AMCB) will work with several grassroots organizations of migrant workers based in several countries, such as the UNIFIL in the migrant receiving state of Hong Kong and with Migrante International and the Asosiasi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia (ATKI-HK) in the migrant sending state of the Philippines and Indonesia. While these grassroots organizations and advocacy groups are "blocked" in their calls for migrant law reform, these organizations will continually link up together and build pressure from below through the sharing of information, calls for migrant solidarity, mass organizing and agitating for a common shared migrant consciousness. Through this build-up, a governance of below model will then lead to the migrant receiving and sending countries to change their laws and policies. This strategy reflects the alternative nationalist and national democratic (ND) ideology as expressed in the Basis of Unity of the International Migrants Alliance (IMA), which state:

> … It is therefore urgent and imperative for the im/migrant communities to band together and mount a global resistance against imperialist and racist attacks to our rights and welfare. While we seriously tackle the need to create and strengthen our own nationally-based movements, these is an equally important need to create a broad front of im/migrant groups and organizations all over the world that will stand up against imperialist globalization and their state-sponsored terrorism against the people and im/migrants… A key part of this resistance is in support for and coordination with the national liberation struggles of the countries dominated by imperialism and especially U.S. imperialism. (IMA 2008: 176).

While the previous section discussed the divergent strategies pursued by the two clusters, the next section will explore the general characteristics and history of each cluster and then will discuss several advocacy campaigns as case studies to highlight the differences in approach pursued by each coalition.

### C. History and Characteristics of Filipino Migrant Advocacy Groups

The Asian Migrant Centre (AMC), a migrant NGO that also serves as the head of their umbrella coalition, leads the RD cluster. Established in 1991, the AMC began under the leadership of May-an C. Villalba, a Filipino national, to address the welfare needs of Filipino domestic helpers in Hong Kong. Since then, it has pioneered or assisted in the establishment of numerous migrants' organizations, networks and initiatives, and has played a key role in the formation of organizations, such as the Migrant Forum in Asia, Coalition for Migrants' Rights, Indonesian Migrant Workers Union, Thai Women

Association, Far East Overseas Nepalese Association and Association of Sri Lankans in Hong Kong (Sim 2003:495).

Aiming to "promote the human rights, dignity and empowerment of migrant workers and their families in Asia, so that they are able to assert and defend their rights and interests, and become partners in sustainable, just and gender-fair social development" (from AMC website, 2011) the AMC and their coalition members concentrate in working for campaigns to promote better "governance from above" on migrant issues and rights. This was manifested when in 1994, the AMC spearheaded the establishment of the Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), an inter-regional network working for more effective communication and coordinated action among NGOs and representation for migrant workers on a regional basis. Together with their partner organizations in Asia, they have been on the forefront of developing regional partnerships and experience in regional-level migrant advocacy and information dissemination on best practices (Macabuag 2006). As such, they have strong transnational advocacy network ties and frequently attend international labor venues such as International Labor Organization (ILO) and Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) conferences. This is also evident with how they pursue their advocacy campaigns in Hong Kong. Vice-Consul Val Roque from the Philippine Consulate explain while the RA cluster of the AMCB frequently hold protest actions at the consulate grounds to appeal toward the Philippine state whenever a new political or policy issue comes up, the AMC and their coalition organizations focus more on regional-level advocacies as exemplified by their participation at Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU) rallies for the rights of foreign domestic workers (FDW).[46]

On the other hand, the RA cluster is led by the Asian Migrants' Coordinating Body (AMCB), a coalition of grassroots migrants' organizations of different nationalities in Hong Kong. Although it was established in 1996, it began as a multinational network of organizations that formed around the first Asian Cultural Festival held in Hong Kong in October 1994. This festival became a venue for over 1,500 migrant workers from India, Indonesia, Thailand, Nepal and the Philippines to meet and begin working together in a

[46] Interview with Roque 2009.

spirit of international solidarity. From then on, a committee of representatives from various ethnic migrant organizations drafted a declaration of unity and ever since has worked on activities, which includes advocacy and organizing, networking and cooperation, and educational activities (Hsia 2009: 120-121).

Indeed, the alternative nationalist strategy is evident in their basis of unity, which they describe as based on a common understanding of the root causes of forced migration, which is linked to their home governments.[47] The chairperson of United Filipinos in Hong Kong (UNIFIL), a coalition member of the AMCB explains that:

> The basic understanding within the AMCB is that all migrant workers from different nationalities are victims of poverty back home. From this basic understanding, we link to the locals, national movements, and global movement. From this understanding of root causes, migrants easily understand why we address issues to Hong Kong government and governments of our home countries (Hsia 2009: 121).

This basis of unity reflects not only their Alternative Nationalist stance, but above all explicitly directs the need for reform on the state-level, rather than towards an international forum on shared migrant rights.

Another key feature of that the AMCB uses to differentiate themselves with the RD cluster is their criticism against NGOism and the importance of grassroots organizing.[48] Indeed the AMCB believes that a strong mass movement is the only solution to the plight of migrants: "we share the belief that only through step-by-step organizing and educating our ranks, engaging ourselves in worthwhile mass actions, shall we address our homesickness and ensure the protection of our rights, welfare, and dignity" (Hsia 2009: 134). As Hsia argues, this emphasis on solid grassroots organizing is a result of many years of experience in the Philippines by the original Filipino migrant organizers, which was gleaned from the experiences of grassroots organizing and the lessons drawn with regard to the dangers of "NGOism" (2009:134).[49] As such, even

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[47] Since the AMCB was founded and led by Filipino advocacy organizations that is part of a larger Filipino social movement, their coalition of migrant organizations from different countries also share their focus on strengthening nationally-based social movements and working for migrant rights through lobbying to their home governments.

[48] For literature on the criticisms or the so-called Malady of NGOism, see Hedman and Sidel (2000) and Hilhorst (2003: 62).

[49] This criticism on NGOism is also a common theme across other civil society sectors in the Philippines. Hilhorst for example explores the discourses of NGO making in the gender

among other migrant organizations from the other cluster, there is recognition of the strength of the AMCB's in mass organization and membership.[50]

## D. Highlighting the Diverging Strategies and Ideologies of the RA and RD Cluster

### D-1. Early Migrant Campaigns in Hong Kong

In her research discussing how migrant organizations forge solidarity with other social movements through multi-sectoral networks and alliances, Alcid explain that the work to protect the rights and interest of the OFW began in the early 1980s, almost a decade after the institutionalization of the labor export program in 1974. It was during this period that organizing work among Filipino workers in Hong Kong, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Western Europe began. The Asia Pacific Mission for Migrant Filipinos (APMMF), one of the pioneering migrant NGOs in Hong Kong, facilitated various conferences and activities for the sharing of initiatives in various countries and planning of regionally coordinated campaigns to raise the issues of overseas Filipinos to the governments of destination countries and the Philippine government. The most successful among these campaigns was the opposition to Marcos' Executive Order No. 857 that required all overseas workers to remit through the banking system with a penalty clause for sanctions against non-compliance. Leading to the establishment of the United Filipinos in Hong Kong (UNIFIL-HK) in 1985, an alliance of 14 organizations of Filipino domestic workers that was launched in cooperation with other Filipino organizations in other countries and the Philippines, they were able to successfully pressure the Marcos government to repeal the penalty clause (2006: 343).

Other than promoting the rights of Filipino migrants, UNIFIL-HK began to ally with organizations of other Asian migrants in Hong Kong. By joining with Nepalese, Indonesian, Sri Lankan and Thai workers, this coalition of migrant workers made it apparent that issues faced by migrant workers cut across cultures and was not limited to single-nation inadequacies (De Guzman 2011). During this period in which there weren't any "clusters" of migrant organizations, the main campaign launched by the

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movement among indigenous peoples in the Northern Philippines. In her study, she also mentions how the criticism against NGOism reflects the strategy employed by the "new National Democratic movement" after the ideological split of the Philippine Left during the early 1990's.

[50] Interview with Roque 2009 and Nisperos 2009.

network was against the policies of the "New Conditions of Stay" for foreign domestic helpers. Introduced in 1987, this included two discriminatory provisions, that of the "two-week rule" and the prohibition of changing employers. The two-week rule required that foreign domestic workers had to go back to their country of origin within two weeks if their contract had been terminated, regardless of the validity of their work visa. Not only were migrants vulnerable and insecure in their jobs, this led to additional financial hardships, as they have to go through the process of recruitment with its exorbitant fees all over again. Other restrictive policies imposed upon foreign domestic workers were the proposed wage cut of 2001. Working with various migrant groups and local civil society, they successfully repelled the proposal after widespread street demonstrations. Although they were successful, 2003 saw the passing of a two-pronged tax scheme, which includes a wage cut, and an employer levy (De Guzman 2011: 270).

Indeed, although the beginnings of diverging migrant advocacy clusters have already emerged in the late 1990s, the provisions of the "New Conditions of Stay" and the salary cuts continue to be the major point of contention even by the present migrant coalitions in Hong Kong. This will have implications to the succeeding campaigns, which will be discussed, in the next section as case studies to highlight the differences in approach, strategies and campaigns by the two migrant clusters.

**D-2. Dialogue with the Labor Department of Hong Kong**

On May 28, 2009, I was able to observe the proceedings of a dialogue between the Labor Department of Hong Kong and the migrant advocacy networks to discuss the possibility of including the wages of foreign domestic workers into the planned Minimum Allowable Wage (MAW) law. During this dialogue, debates into possible revisions of the "New Conditions of Stay", particularly the two-week rule was also raised by both migrant coalitions, albeit with different emphasis which highlight their divergent strategies and diaspora nationalist frameworks.

For the RD-AMC cluster, which was represented by their Executive Director Rex Varona, their main line of argument was that the salaries of the foreign domestic workers (FDW) should be included to the proposed MAW law since Hong Kong holds a special place in the international community as an OECD economy. Arguing that since

Hong Kong, together with other developed economies of the world, have accepted and ratified the 2003 United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (UNICRM) and that domestic work is already recognized in the region as genuine productive work, it is only proper that the labor department of Hong Kong include the wages of FDWs under the proposed MAW law. Indeed, the AMC centered their campaign toward the appeal for better "governance from above" in the regional level.

On the other hand, while the RA-AMCB also debated with the labor officials for the inclusion of the salaries of FDWs into the proposed MAW by emphasizing that domestic labor was also universally accepted as labor under law, their focus was not on appealing toward regional laws, but rather on more traditional views that the labor department together with the legislative council have the responsibility to uphold labor rights under Hong Kong law.

**D-3. Dialogue with the Consul General of the Philippine Consulate in Hong Kong**

A few days after the dialogue with labor department of Hong Kong, I was also able to participate on a dialogue between the RA-AMCB and the newly appointed Consul General Cristobal on May 31, 2009. After introductions with the consul general sharing his main goals during his term in office, the AMCB and the UNIFIL-HK discussed the main issues and concerns of the migrants and grassroots organizations in Hong Kong which included the issues of placement fees and illegal recruitment, the concern on the recent ban on direct hiring in Hong Kong and lastly how to promote better relations and understanding between the consulate and the Filipino community in Hong Kong. Particularly, the consul general's office aims to promote and maintain the high participation rates of the Filipino community in the upcoming overseas absentee voting elections of 2010.

During the discussion, the RA cluster introduced the newly created "SKRAP the BAN coalition" which was made up of 75 grassroots and migrant organizations who are advocating for the revocation of the ban on direct hiring policy by the Philippine government. As explained in the previous section, one of the main problems of the "New Conditions of Stay" for foreign domestic worker is the two-week rule, in which the FDW

has to return to his country of origin within two weeks of their work contract termination. In order to combat the problems and financial burdens of returning home and go through the recruitment process once again, recent FDW have managed to circumvent the two-week rule by finding through informal channels potential employers who can hire them before their two week leeway expire. While this practice of direct hiring might seem practical and pragmatic for the Filipino domestic workers, the Philippine government and labor ministry view this practice as problematic and could lead to illegal recruitment or even to vulnerability and abuse since the Filipino migrant doesn't go through the proper channels of contract signing between the appropriate government agencies, recruitment companies and the migrant worker. While the government might be concerned for the interests of the migrants, the SKRAP the BAN coalition argues that this policy only serves the recruitment companies and the government. The UNIFIL argues in their press release that the "overcharging of recruitment fees and the lack of government protection and services are the widespread and serious problems we are facing, not direct hiring. Direct hiring is in fact the only recourse we have to get saved from overcharging of greedy recruiters" (UNIFIL Press release 2009). While the dialogue was a civil and casual affair, it was clear that the stance and strategy of the RA cluster is seeking for bigger responsibility of the Philippine state, migration bureaucracy and migration industry, reflecting alternative nationalist discourses throughout the discussions.

After the meeting, I found it curious that the dialogue was only between the RA and the consul general without the presence of the RD cluster. A few days later, during an interview with Vice Consul Roque, I learned that the consul general had a separate dialogue with the RD cluster a few hours before the meeting with the AMCB. Asking on how the dialogue went about, Vice Consul Roque explained that the AMC also discussed issue-based campaigns, such as those related to the minimum wage law in Hong Kong. Discussing further the main differences on the approach and dynamics between the AMC and the AMCB, Vice Consul Roque explained that while the AMC also did advocacy activities, they do not resort to the traditional mass actions employed by the AMCB and UNIFIL, such as protesting in front of the Philippine consulate, burning effigies and resorting to name calling and personal attacks against government officials, such as the

previously assigned Labor Attaché who proved to be unpopular with the RA cluster.[51] Furthermore, while the AMC approach and style is said to be more responsive, cooperative and non-reactionary toward the consulate, their cluster mostly appeals toward the need for setting better standards, which complies with international and regional commitment together with more responsive implementation.[52]

#### 4.2.1.3. Demotic Nationalism

**A. From Alternative Nationalist toward Demotic Nationalism**

The previous section highlighted the diverging strategies pursued by migrant advocacy networks in Hong Kong, this section meanwhile will discuss how migrants negotiate and place themselves within the contending forces between the RA and RD alternative nationalist groups. Although these migrant networks have a big influence in the outlook and actions of migrants, this section will show that migrants themselves are moving toward a more pragmatic and utilitarian focus on their outcomes based on common experiences and popular understandings of diaspora nationalism, a demotic form of nationalism. In his seminal work exploring ethnic identity in a multicultural community in London, Gerd Baumann proposes the existence of dominant and demotic discourse (1996). Referring to dominant discourses as discourses promoted by the state or by civil society, he counterpoints these discourses by proposing another form of discourse, one that is based on the everyday understandings and practiced of people. Referring to these as demotic (literally "of the people") discourses, this section jumps off from Baumann theories and will posit how migrants in Hong Kong interpret Filipino nationalism directed towards them by the state and civil society groups and through a demotic process, negotiate and practice their own demotic form of diaspora nationalism, one that is not necessarily anti-state nor pro-civil society but above all geared towards practical concerns and rooted in their everyday and shared experiences.

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[51] On the question on why RA cluster / ND NGOs are against working with the government in their campaigns, Hilhorst discusses how a large number of measures were taken to change the organizational structures, practices and discursive repertoires of the NGOs within the ND movement. She explains that a: "thorough political education was to ensure that NGO staff members (re) mastered the proper language of the movement. To avoid confusion, the oppositional stance to government policies was no longer watered down by simultaneously cooperating with government line agencies, which would be limited to a minimum" (2003: 63).

[52] Interview with Roque 2009.

Existing literature has already discussed the importance of shared common experiences among migrants. Hedman and Sidel discusses how Filipino migrants across the globe has found a new basis for their Filipino nationalism, one that is based on commonly shared popular experiences, one in which being part of the larger diaspora while living away from the homeland (2000). Similar to Hedman and Sidel, Parrenas also refer to how Filipino domestic helpers across the globe are beginning to have a common identity (2001b). Discussing how forms of print media highlight the shared experiences of domestic workers in Hong Kong and Italy, Parrenas argues that these domestic workers have began to imagine a being part of a global imagined community of domestic helpers. However unlike Hedman, Sidel and Baumann, her study posits that these imagined community of global domestic helpers should unite and work for their rights, suggesting the need to follow the strategies employed by the alternative nationalists.

While these scholars raise important points, this section will highlight the demotic character of Filipino nationalism as practiced by migrant workers in Hong Kong. This section will show how they exhibit agency by taking into account the rhetoric and discourses promoted by the alternative nationalists and at the same time, negotiate their own understanding and practice of nationalism. This shows that in spite of the contending nationalisms directed towards them by the state and rival alternative nationalists (the RA and RD clusters), migrants exhibit patterns of resistance, non-participation and the larger theme of negotiation. Some of the evidence and how demotic nationalism will be highlighted in the next sections, particularly on the trend of lower political participation by the everyday Filipino migrant worker in Hong Kong, changing views on social mobility, step-migration and pragmatic views regarding the migration-development debate that are contrary both to the official nationalism and alternative nationalism discourses.

**B. Trends on Political Participation**

Of the more substantive trends, which have a big impact with the future of migrant advocacy in Hong Kong, the seemingly lower participation rate among migrants in advocacy and transnational political activities is noteworthy. Although the RA-AMCB

cluster with its multi-stranded and multi-level coalition that spans various migrant organizations and other ethnic groups enjoy much higher participation and mobilization in migrant advocacy activities than the RD-AMC cluster, there are signs that show the gradual weakening of overall migrant political participation. Chief among these are the recent trends regarding Overseas Absentee Voting (OAV) participation during the recent national elections of 2010. While the past OAV exercises in Hong Kong have always enjoyed the highest participation among all consulates and embassies in the world, the recent national elections surprisingly showed lower participation than was expected. Indeed, while it was Consul General Cristobal's explicit goal that Hong Kong maintain its high level of OAV participation by pouring resources, manpower and constant dialogue with various Filipino organizations in Hong Kong, the latest figure show that participation rates decreased (GMA 2010, COMELEC 2009). While many factors could be attributed to this change, the results were quite surprising considering that this round of absentee voting was for national posts rather than mid-term elections, with national positions such as the presidency, senator seats and the party-list positions up for grabs. Furthermore, Filipino migrant organizations from both clusters worked diligently to each out toward migrant workers by educating, appealing and even campaigning for their supported political candidate and parties (PCG-HK 2010, TIME 2010).[53]

**Table 4.4. OAV Participation rates in Hong Kong**

| Hong Kong | Registered | Actually Voted | Who Voted (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2010 | 95,355 | 39,833 | 41.77 |
| 2007 | 96,505 | 19,185 | 19.88 |
| 2004 | 88,363 | 62,885 | 71.17 |

Source: Compiled from various news and official COMELEC sources (GMA 2010, COMELEC 2009)

Another outcome that has significant effects with the RA-AMCB cluster is the failure of their party list organization, Migrante Sectoral Party to win a seat at the Philippine Congress in 2004. Organized and formally launched in 1996, Migrante was

[53] Due to Hong Kong's geographically proximity, political candidates regularly visit the island to appeal towards the migrant absentee vote and their influence toward their home families during the election campaign periods. Indeed it is common for Hometown Associations (HTAs) to be visited by their incumbent congressmen/women to discuss possible migrant community projects after successful election outcomes (ATIS 2009).

established as a sectoral party for the part-list elections to represent the issues and rights of migrant workers. Belonging to the National Democratic (ND) social movement in the Philippines, it enjoyed high visibility and participation among the ND networks among its partner organizations in Saudi Arabia, various Southeast Asian countries, Filipinos in the US and Europe, and most especially migrants in Hong Kong. Indeed, their first candidate was Connie Bragas-Regalado, a long-time domestic helper in Singapore and Hong Kong who became full-time activist with UNIFIL-HK. While the organization seemed destined to get elected due to their strong migrant advocacy networks in Asia, they failed to gather enough votes during the 2004 elections, and because they did not push through with their participation in the May 2007 mid-term elections, they were disbarred from contesting the recent 2010 elections (De Guzman 2011: 274-275). While the organization accuses the government of undermining their activities, this nevertheless shows that Migrante and the RA advocacy groups still have a long way to go toward addressing low voting turnout of overseas absentee voting and engaging with the most recent groups of migrant workers in Hong Kong.

**C. Social Mobility and Step-Migration**

Another aspect that has big implications to the future of migrant advocacy in Hong Kong is the hiring trend among foreign domestic workers. While Hong Kong is still a major destination for Filipino migrants, they are facing employment pressures from other migrant groups, particularly with the increasing number of Indonesian workers. Due to their position as pioneers in migrant domestic work, their mastery of the English language and the strength of Filipino migrant advocacy, Filipinos still enjoy higher salaries and benefits than their Indonesian counterparts.

Indeed, although the literature (Hsia 2009, Constable 2009) show that the relationship between ethnic migrant groups are non-conflicting and that they all learn from each other in raising socio-political awareness and solidarity especially on their rights as workers, the changing labor and hiring trend is a growing concern for Filipinos. Indeed it is precisely the privileged higher salaries that Filipinos enjoy today that encourage new employers to hire Indonesians. These market trends, coupled with the aggressive migrant labor promotion by the Indonesian state, makes long-term Filipino employment in Hong Kong a concern. During an interview with Vice Consul Val

Roque and several officials from the Philippine National Bank in Hong Kong (PNB-HK), they expressed they concern that although the Filipino community and ethnic businesses are glad that Filipino migrants still enjoy higher benefits and salaries, this might prove detrimental in terms of long-term Filipino employment and ethnic businesses in the island. Indeed, they mentioned that unlike Filipinos, Indonesian migrants have been receiving Chinese (Cantonese) language training even before leaving Hong Kong.[54]

Furthermore, while Filipinos still enjoy higher benefits compared with other ethnic groups, the salaries and benefits of domestic helpers as a whole are gradually decreasing. As shown in the previous sections, the slow growth of the Hong Kong economy has led to various salary reductions and the non-inclusion of domestic worker salaries into the Minimum Allowable Wage (MAW) in spite of active protest by the various migrant advocacy networks. Based from several interviews with migrant activists and grassroots organization leaders, they explained that their salaries and benefits are a major cause of concern and that migrants still participate in advocacy campaigns toward the Philippine and Hong Kong governments. Indeed recent trends have some that more and more Filipino migrants are taking a pragmatic view regarding their employment prospects. With their migrant salaries and benefits decreasing, most migrants simply accept the changing labor market trends and stay in Hong Kong only to gain practical experience. After working for several years, they are planning to move on into other countries for employment, either to the Middle East and Singapore as domestic workers, or to the more prestigious and preferable jobs as caregivers in the emerging labor markets in Canada, New Zealand and Europe (Interview with Ceradoy 2009). These trends are reflected in some studies have shown that this "step-migration" is already an established occurrence and pattern for domestic helpers / care givers in Canada who were originally domestic helpers from Hong Kong (Tsujimoto 2010).

In her research discussing the emergence of new subjectivities among Filipino domestic helpers in Hong Kong, Ogaya cites the growing role of social activities oriented toward promoting social mobility. She explains that for migrants, while moving beyond domestic work and working at higher status jobs seems the simplest way of achieving

[54] Interview with Roque 2009 and interview with PNB-HK Officials 2009.

social mobility, changing jobs is not always possible in other countries in Asia that mostly employ domestic helpers. As such they need special skills to take up overseas jobs other than domestic work. Ogaya then explains that due to this reason, various skills training programs have been popular among the Filipino migrants who intend to go to different countries to get better jobs: "the nursing aid course is an example of a skills training program oriented towards promoting the upward mobility of migrant domestic workers. It is the most popular course among the skills training programs, alongside the computer class" (2004: 394-395). Furthermore, she explains that most respondents took courses because they wanted to work at a medical or nursing job when they return to the Philippines or they wanted to go to Canada as a nursing aide or care giver (2004: 395). These trends of migrant workers in Hong Kong being pessimistic on their work prospects as domestic workers while at the same time looking for greener pastures in other labor destinations show that for Filipino migrant workers, protesting and campaigning for migrant rights and better conditions in Hong Kong is not enough.

**D. Pragmatic views on the Migration-Development Nexus Debate**

One of the main divisive issues that highlight the differences between the two clusters and the specific outlook of alternative nationalists on migrant issues is their stance on migrant investments and reintegration programs. While this issue will be explored in detail in chapter six, it is important to describe the dynamics and show how both Hong Kong advocacy groups and migrants themselves view this issue.

Although the RA-AMCB cluster formally takes the stance against the current interpretation of the migration and development nexus and similar projects on migrant reintegration, their views on this matter hasn't always been negative. During an interview with the Cynthia Abdon-Tellez, director of the Mission for Migrant Workers (MFMW), she explains the Filipino migrant advocacy community in Hong Kong used to be receptive to migrant reintegration initiatives and that they in fact pioneered several projects during the early 1990s. She cites the case of a hometown cooperative initiated and financed in 1994 by domestic helpers from Cordillera region of Northern Luzon, Philippines. Coordinating with some selected family members and the local *barangay* (village level) officials; the pilot project initially was doing well. Conceptualized as an alternative means to earn money and a possible long-term option for migrants for their

gradual reintegration to their hometown, the project then suffered several setbacks. First was the problem of financial transparency and sustainability, in which the managers was not very forthright on how they used the capital from remittances and increasing competition from rival and established local businesses. Another aspect was the issue of "elite-capture" in which members of the local political elites wanted to manage the project themselves and gain socio-political recognition in the community. These factors together with personal issues between the migrants, their families back home, the local elites and managers ultimately led to the failure of their fledging enterprise. Abdon-Tellez explains that although they supported endeavors on micro-finance and reintegration, they came to the conclusion that such activities are financially unsustainable and prone to elite capture.[55]

Other than the issues of problematic social relations and financial sustainability, the RA cluster formally adopts the ND view that although reintegration and migrant investment programs are important and are not problematic per se, such initiatives veer away from the main issues of government responsibility for migrant protection and long-term economic development and employment back home. Believing that migration, remittances and development issues rationalizes the state migrant export models and perpetuates the "myth of migration for development" (Ibon 2009), this issue is one of the main divisive positions that separate the alternative nationalist with the transnational activist network cluster. Eman Villanueva of the UNIFIL-HK explains that although both clusters have their ideological differences, they have been civil with each other since they both work for migrants' rights. However, he believes that their stance on migrant investment is not reconcilable to their core believes and ideals. He states that while the AMC coalition has programs for maximizing migrant remittances for reintegration, he believes that ultimately such activities don't address the root causes of Philippine labor export, and it fails to address the fundamental problems of Philippine society and the push factors that led to massive Philippine labor migration.[56]

For the side of the RD-AMC cluster meanwhile, they don't see any problems with their projects on migrant reintegration and remittance for investments. Indeed, it was

[55] Interview with Abdon-Tellez 2009.
[56] Interview with Villanueva 2009.

the AMC through their Migrant Savings and Alternative Investments for Community Development and Reintegration (MSAI for CDR) program that initiated such projects among foreign domestic workers, initially starting with Filipino organizations and moving into other foreign groups such as the Indonesian and Thai associations (Molina and Verona 2004). In fact it was the founder and former director of the AMC, May-an Villaba who created Unlad Kabayan, an offshoot organization in the Philippines to maximize and concentrate on migrant remittance initiatives. Although they recognize that such initiatives are not cure-all solutions to long-term problems of migrant remittance dependency and also have limitations, such as criticism of financial sustainability, the AMC explains that its basic aim was not to force migrants to go back home, but rather to "emphasize the centrality of the migrant savings and social entrepreneurship agenda, and to assert that the strategic direction of these two efforts (savings and social entrepreneurship) are to help in community development and in the migrants' preparation for their eventual return/reintegration" (2004: 34).

While it is clear that the RA and RD clusters have opposing views on the contentious issue of migrant remittances and migration for development discourses, the average migrant in Hong Kong follows a more pragmatic view. Although there are migrants and migrant organizations that have strong views on this issue, for most migrants, they follow these projects and initiatives that seem practical and helpful for their families and communities back home. As such, although there are several projects for migrant reintegration and micro-finance initiatives, most Filipino migrants and organizations practice economic transnationalism through philanthropic and charitable activities.

Indeed philanthropic activities of OFWs were already evident since the 1980s. Alcid cites the case of various Filipino organizations abroad, notably those of domestic workers in Hong Kong, who raised funds for the sacadas (seasonal and migrant sugar workers) of Negros Island who experienced unemployment and starvation due to the collapse of the sugar industry (2006: 343). Rima Cunanang, a migrant community leader who has been working as a foreign domestic worker in Hong Kong for the past eighteen years and leader of the United Pangasinan in Hong Kong (UPHK), an HTA and "grassroots organization" under the RA cluster, explains that most Filipino

organizations don't focus so much on migrant and development nor investment programs, but rather on simply helping their home communities. This includes fund-raising activities, such as concerts, raffle tickets and other social events for children's scholarship, beautification and community development projects and donations during natural disasters. She mentions the activities of UPHK that include philanthropic donations to renovate and fix playgrounds and waiting sheds in schools in their hometowns and annual Christmas charity activities that give old toys and food products to the most needy families in their hometowns in Pangasinan.[57] As such, it is quite clear that for the vast majority of Filipino migrants in Hong Kong, it is programs for migrant philanthropy and charities that are closer to the hearts of migrants rather than reintegration and migration for development initiatives.

### 4.2.2. Primacy of Demotic Nationalism

The previous literature focusing on migrant advocacy in Hong Kong has mostly focused on how advocacy is moving beyond ethnic specific into trans-ethnic and trans-organizational (Piper 2005: 115) in character. They also discuss how advocacy groups (Rother 2009) are exhibiting either governance from above (i.e. the focus of the RD cluster) or governance from below (i.e. the focus of the RA cluster); this chapter analyzes the diverging strategy and underlying ideology of these migrant advocacy groups through a diaspora nationalism lens. Although overlapping of characteristics and features are present in the formulation of these ideal types, this chapter shows that diaspora nationalism play a big role in shaping the dynamics, strategies and outcomes of migrant advocacy in Hong Kong. The strength and the main contribution of these alternative nationalist advocacy groups lies in their assertion that the Philippine state is complicit to the exploitation of the Filipino migrant worker, particularly through its policies that focus on deployment rather than protection and above all shows the hypocrisy of their assertion that the Filipino OFW is a modern day hero (*bagong bayani*), when in reality, these migrants suffer and should be seen as martyrs to the lost cause of the Philippine state.

In explaining how these advocacy groups based in Hong Kong have been successful in political organization and mass protests, we have to consider that Filipino

[57] Interview with Cunanang 2009.

migrant advocacy organizations in Hong Kong is part of the broader Filipino mass movements back home, namely that of the Philippine left. Hsia explains that the strength of Filipino migrant organizations can only be fully understood if situated in the broader context of the Filipino mass movement. Citing the case of the AMCB as part of the progressive mass movement in the Philippines, she mentions that it is a member of Migrante-International, which is convinced that the solution to the migration of Filipinos abroad lies in resolving the basic problems of the Filipino people (2009:136). While Hsia was correct in arguing that the AMCB's strength lies in part with their membership in a broader mass movement, it could be equally argued that this is the main factor of their weakness.

As this chapter shows, migrants exhibit agency on how they negotiate and create their own understanding and interpretation of their situations, as manifested by the growth of demotic nationalism. This is exemplified when we examine how migrants themselves have a more pragmatic outlook on the activities of the AMCB. While they appreciate the services and support that such migrant organizations offer them, in closer analysis it is shown that migrants ultimately follow what is more helpful to their situation. Indeed, we can argue that their basic stance can be described as neither being explicitly for the state nor against the state. Rather, it is a position that seeks help in their goals to support their families back home, or to gaining access to higher social outcomes, either by returning back home or more often than not, going to another country through step-migration. This sentiment is exemplified by the common often-stated adage: "I didn't go to Hong Kong to be an activist, I came to work for my family back home".

As such, the practice of diaspora nationalism for the common migrant worker in Hong Kong is not choice between official or alternative nationalism, and rather one that negotiates calls for nationalism that ultimately seeks the best migrant outcomes possible. This pragmatic way of thinking by migrants highlights the demotic dimension of diaspora nationalism, indeed a growing number of migrants, especially those of the younger generation of domestic helpers with highly-sought after skills are looking for a better labor opportunities and chances for permanent migration to other countries. While it might be too soon to argue and generalize the shift in orientation of diaspora

nationalisms, it nevertheless shows the challenges faced by the more traditional and orthodox alternative nationalist advocacy models.

This section focused on the dynamics of diaspora nationalisms in HK and have shown that although alternative nationalism has been strong in HK, particularly in their focus on migrant rights and the callousness of the state to label migrants as "heroes" when they are in fact "martyrs", nevertheless demotic nationalism has primacy over the other nationalisms. This is shown by the recent trends showing lower political participation of migrants, the prevalence of step-migration as a genuine option over migrant activisms, and above all, their pragmatic stance on migration and development, which is the central issue of debate among the alternative nationalists. Now that we have established the primacy of demotic nationalism, the next section will discuss how the dynamics of diaspora nationalisms and the diaspora experience in Hong Kong has led to the reimagining of the Filipino nation.

### 4.3. Diaspora Nationalisms and Reimagining the Filipino Nation

#### 4.3.1. Reimagining the Filipino Nation: Locating the Filipino Nation in Hong Kong

As explained in the previous sections has argued, contending diaspora nationalisms and the primacy of demotic nationalism has led to the reimagining of the Filipino nation. While previous literature has discussed how the nation was reimagined, it nevertheless focuses on how migrants reimagine their Filipino national identity and how the nation exists in their host communities while abroad, rather than focusing on how the diaspora experience had led to the reimagining the homeland itself. Some of these studies include Appadurai's theoretical discussion on how globalization has led to the existence of ethnoscapes across the globe (2001, 1996), which can also be used to describe the Filipino diaspora community in Hong Kong. Another approach is the assertion that regional migrant advocacy networks has led to the creation of transnational social spaces (Rother 2009c, Faist 2000) which also coincides with the studies of Hsia (2009) highlighting that the compact and geographic proximity of Filipino migrants in Hong Kong has led to the ease of creating spaces for protest. Following this approach, alternative nationalists can claim that the Filipino nation is becoming deterritorialized and does exist every time these groups protest in front of

the Hong Kong migration and labor bureaus and also the Philippine consulate in Hong Kong.

While the existence of the Filipino nation in Hong Kong does have credence as evidenced by the level of political participation, mass mobilizations and socio-cultural events, the most recent years highlight a different trend. Recent years have seen the gradual lowering rates of political participation and mobilizations, together with the acceptance that advocacy and protest work in Hong Kong is not as important as before. This has led to the demotic interpretation that step-migration and seeking new labor destinations are the most pragmatic actions for these Filipino migrants. As such, it is therefore plausible to think that the Filipino nation too can exist outside of Hong Kong and the homeland.

### 4.3.2. Reimagining of the Filipino Nation:

#### Deconstructing "Imagined Communities"

This chapter, together with highlighting the dynamics between the contending diaspora nationalism, shows evidence to support the other main theme of this study that argues: the Filipino diaspora experience has led to the reimagining of the Filipino nation. Deconstructing Anderson's imagined communities (2003), this chapter has shown that it has gone beyond the four main themes presented by Anderson, namely that of imagined, limited, sovereign and community.

Deconstructing "Imagined", migrants working in Hong Kong not only reimagine themselves as part of a global diaspora, or as sharing common identities such as domestic helpers, activists, heroes (*bagong bayani*) or martyrs, rather they together with their families and home communities back home reimagine the nation, the homeland as having changed itself. This is manifested by how they practice diaspora nationalisms and the primacy of demotic nationalism. Deconstructing "Limited", the Filipino nation is now reimagined as deterritorialized as exemplified when both migrants and Filipinos living in the homeland are made aware of the strong mass movements and regional advocacy that diaspora groups and overseas Filipino associations have in Hong Kong, whether it be directed toward the Hong Kong bureaucracy or the Philippine consulate. This is especially true for the advocacy groups

under the RA cluster, in which their guiding principles from the National Democratic movement (ND) of the Philippines (IMA 2008) has in turn shaped the discourse and protest movements by other migrant advocacy groups in the global and regional level (Rother). Furthermore, this deterritorialization of the nation is all the more enhanced with the initial successes of overseas absentee voting (OAV) and direct advocacy actions in Hong Kong.

The Filipino nation, which is reimagined as being deterritorialized, also highlights the concept of sovereignty. Deconstructing "Sovereign", while Anderson discusses how the centrality of the state in the imagining of the nation, this chapter shows that although the state still plays a big role in the life of migrants, the state doesn't have primacy anymore. As the Philippine diaspora experience in Hong Kong has shown us, the alternative nationalist have gained much ground in promoting their own version of alternative nationalism which is critical of the state. It is precisely in Hong Kong that the first round of migrant activists were able to successfully pressure the state to suspend its policies of mandatory remittances during the Marcos period (Alcid 2006), and after much years gaining experience, they are also in the forefront of pursuing regional and global level advocacy for migrants' rights and protection. However, in as much as advocacy groups have made progress in their advocacy work, closer analysis has shown that the primacy of demotic nationalism among the diaspora community in Hong Kong. This is evidenced by the demotic interpretation of their diaspora experience particularly on their views on step-migration, migration and development and focus on pragmatic migration outcomes.

Deconstructing "Community", the Filipino nation is reimagined as having an expansive community that shares strong horizontal bonds. These bonds are not based on the state with its formal citizenship status and laws; rather the community is based on Filipino identity, Filipinoness and shared lived diaspora experiences. This is true for the Filipino diaspora community in Hong Kong, particularly with the rich and multiple ties and bonds that these migrants share among them. This is evidenced by the complexity and multiple memberships to various migrant organizations - whether it is based in Hong Kong or in the homeland. This includes hometown associations (HTA), civic groups and professional organizations in Hong Kong, to church groups and HTAs

who have strong activities and maintain ties to their home communities in the Philippines. It is exactly due to the strength of these horizontal bonds that has led the Filipino migrant to reconcile their love of country, and their expressed desire to work toward new labor markets beyond Hong Kong and the Philippines.

In summary, this chapter explored the dynamics and the contending relations between the diaspora nationalisms in Hong Kong. While alternative nationalist groups are known for making Hong Kong as the cradle of migrant activism in the world (Rother 2009c), the case studies and analysis of this chapter shows the primacy of demotic nationalism. While it might be too soon to generalize that the alternative nationalist project among Filipino migrants are getting weaker, it nevertheless shows that previous assumptions on the strength and dynamism of Filipino migrant activism in Hong Kong needs to be reevaluated and revisited. Furthermore, by highlighting the primacy of demotic nationalism, this chapter also has shown how the Filipino nation is being reimagined by the Filipino diaspora in Hong Kong. While this chapter highlights the primacy of demotic nationalism and the reimagining of the Filipino nation, the next chapter will compare the Filipino diaspora experience in Hong Kong with the case studies of Filipino communities in Japan. While their context and situation greatly differ, the next chapter will show that in Japan too, demotic nationalism has primacy and also leads to the reimaging of the Filipino nation.

## Chapter Five
## Transcending Victimhood and the
## Demotic Reimagining of the Filipino Nation

The main focus of this chapter will show the contending nature of the diaspora nationalisms as directed toward the Filipino community in Japan. Other than showing the dynamics and contentions of these diverging nationalisms, this chapter will clearly show the primacy of demotic nationalism, which is exhibited by the nature in which the official and alternative discourses directed towards them are negotiated and interpreted on their own terms, shows the pragmatic and demotic dimension of their nationalism. Furthermore, this chapter also argues that in light of the contending nationalism directed towards them; the Filipino community in Japan has begun to reimagine the Filipino nation itself. This chapter will show how even this reimagining has a demotic dimension, showing how their views on the reimagine nation also differs depending on the actor, on their specific perspective and worldview.

This chapter in particular will focus on how the Filipino community in Japan attempts to go beyond the stigma and emotional baggage of the *Japayuki* discourse and reimagine whether the Filipino nation exists in their adopted home of Japan. More importantly, this reimagining will highlight how this reimagined Global Filipino nation is based on the Filipino identity and shared lived experiences, rather than a concrete and orthodox conception of the nation state that is bound by national borders, formal nationality and citizenship statuses.

In order to highlight the main arguments, this chapter will focus on the Filipino diaspora community throughout the years and will highlight these changes through several in-depth interviews and fieldwork researches done by the researcher through his years studying in Japan. Although some studies have attempted to provide an exhaustive and representative research that explains the substantive changes that the Filipino community in Japan has gone through, this chapter does not aim to provide nor promises an actual representation of the Filipino community in Japan. Rather, this research will provide an in-depth focus on the dynamics between the various social actors in Japan, namely that of the Philippine state, Filipino advocacy groups and actual

migrant communities in Japan together with their interaction with the larger Japanese state and Japanese local civil society. By exploring the diverging views and activities of these social actors and informants, this chapter aims to provide substantial evidence on the ground on the practice and understanding of diaspora nationalism.

This chapter is divided into five sections. First, this chapter will discuss the context of Filipino migration to Japan and will show how in spite of the old perceptions of vulnerability and the problems of differential exclusion, the Filipino community is rapidly changing. This section will also introduce the methodology of the study and the main respondents for this chapter. Second, this chapter will then discuss the practice of diaspora nationalism according to the three ideal types, similar to how it was discussed in the previous chapter. Third, this chapter will highlight the primacy of demotic nationalism, mainly by exploring how the Filipino community has experienced three phases since the waves of labor migration first stared in Japan. Fourth, this chapter will then discuss how the Filipino community in Japan is moving beyond the narratives of victimhood and how it relates to the reimagination of the Filipino nation. This chapter ends by reiterating the main points of this chapter and analyzing how the mentioned case studies highlight the practice of diaspora nationalism and the reimagining of the nation by Filipinos in Japan.

### 5.1. Context of the Changing Filipino Community in Japan

In discussing the Filipino diaspora experience in East Asia, Filipino migration to Japan is a contrast of sorts compared with the Filipino diaspora experience in Hong Kong. While both are known for their migration control policies that follow the model of differential exclusion (Castles 2004), their basis of national identification differs, with Japan emphasizing ethnicity, and Hong Kong arguably having a more civic nationalist basis. This in turn affects how they promote their migration policies.[58] For Japan, the myth of homogeneity plays a large role in shaping Japanese identity from the post-war development period onwards (Oguma 2002, Lie 2001), while for Hong Kong lies in their

[58] Castles proposes three migration policy models, namely that of differential exclusion, assimilation and multiculturalism. He defines differential exclusion as policies, which accept immigrants only within strict and functional limits. These migrants are given contracts, in which they are expected to go back to their homelands and don't allow reunification and settlement by their families in the host society (Castles 2004).

cosmopolitan identity as a global city (Constable 2009).[59] In terms of migrant civil society groups, the Filipino advocacy networks in Hong Kong are in the forefront in fighting for migrant rights both in Hong Kong and in the Asian region (Hsia 2009), while the Filipino community has a more subdued role within Japan's migrant civil society, with the *Zainichi* Koreans and Chinese being at the vanguard (Chung 2010). As such, while the social costs of migration and problems brought by the feminization of migration among Filipino migrants in Asia are always discussed in migrant advocacy circles, it seems that Filipinos in Hong Kong are more protected and comparatively secure than their counterparts leaving for Japan. David articulated this when he described the Filipinos community in Japan during the 1980's as being vulnerable "as long as they operate without the proper work permit, and for as long as Japan continues 'to need the labor but not the laborer' " (1991: 23). In contrast, Filipinos in Hong Kong are largely seen by Filipinos as being better protected, leading Rother to describe Hong Kong as being the cradle of OFW activism (2009).[60]

**Table 5.1. Top Destinations of Overseas Filipinos in East Asia in 2011**

| | Permanent | Temporary | Undocumented | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Malaysia[61] | 26,006 | 95,485 | 447,590 | 569,081 |
| Japan | 154,219 | 57,333 | 9,330 | 220,882 |
| Hong Kong | 13,251 | 156,600 | 5,000 | 174,851 |
| Singapore | 44,100 | 86,500 | 49,400 | 180,000 |
| Taiwan | 8,630 | 83,416 | 1,850 | 93,896 |
| South Korea | 12,310 | 63,714 | 11,860 | 87,884 |

Source: Stock estimate data as of December 2011 (CFO 2011b)

[59] This belief of Hong Kong as being a global city is frequently used by advocacy groups to further frame their advocacy work for migrants. For example, the AMC of Hong Kong always mentions that since Hong Kong is a global city which follows global standards, then it only follows that its laws on minimum wage and work hours should also reflect the standards used in the developed world.

[60] Scholars attribute Hong Kong as the cradle of OFW activism due to several factors. This includes: Hong Kong's relatively progressive labor policies on migrants, the geographic concentration of migrants which leads to high migrant participation on mass protests for migrant rights, the growth of Filipino migrant advocacy groups which not only do advocacy work on the Hong Kong level, but also in the regional and global level as well.

[61] The high number of migrants in Malaysia, particularly of undocumented labor, cannot simply be attributed to labor migration and push-pull factors. Rather, scholars note that this region in Southeast Asia had always had porous borders with multiple ethnic groups living across the common borders of the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia (Tigno 2003). This is highlighted when the number of refugees from the Southern Philippines fled to Malaysia during the decades long conflict in Mindanao, and by the recent territorial dispute between the Philippines and Malaysia on the historical claim of the Sultan of Sulu towards Northern Sabah. This had come to blows when in early 2013, the Sultan of Sulu called his tribal clansmen to occupy a town in Sabah, leading to armed skirmishes between Sulu tribesmen and Malaysian security forces (Abinales 2013).

While the dichotomy between the empowered Filipino domestic worker in Hong Kong stand in contrast to the weak and vulnerable Filipino entertainers in Japan are stuck in the collective consciousness of Filipinos back home, the recent years have shown a dramatic reversal of outcomes. Although Hong Kong is still a primary destination for contractual migrant work in Asia, the relative good salaries and benefits of domestic helpers, which migrant civil society has worked hard to fight for, have experienced several set backs such as the lowering of their minimum wage and benefits (De Guzman 2011). Furthermore, as more and more migrants are facing unfavorable conditions in Hong Kong, Filipino migrants are pursuing trajectories known as "step-migration" to better migrant destinations (Tsujimoto 2010).[62] On the other hand, contrary to popular belief, the recent years has seen the Filipino community in Japan shift from being contractual workers toward being a settlement destination. Being host to the 4th largest group of permanent Filipino migrants in the world and the largest permanent Filipino migrant community in Asia (CFO 2011b), Filipinos in Japan are settling in and moving into new work opportunities in higher status jobs, particularly in the health services and education sectors (Ballescas 2010, 2009, San Jose and Ballescas 2010).

Based from the literature gaps and the need to revisit the Filipino community in Japan, this section will discuss the Filipino diaspora communities in Japan, highlighting how old perceptions, as represented by the *Japayuki* narrative is being overshadowed by new trends of settlement and engagement with their host society, which this chapter argues is a manifestation of demotic nationalism. While previous literature have focused on the temporary and cyclical nature of Filipino migration to Japan; and the role of migrant civil society in offering migrant protection and services to the migrants, there is already a growing literature that has shown how Japanese migration policies are changing and that the Filipino community in Japan are gradually changing from

[62] Step-migration can be defined as the process in which migrants move from their previous host country toward another country of destination, with their prior migrant destination, a mere "step" towards a more desirable permanent destination. In the case of Filipinos, this next destination is to the more traditional migrant receiving countries that allow for permanent migration and family reunification.

being temporary and cyclical, towards being one of the top destination of Filipino permanent migrants in the world.

**Table 5.2. Changes in the Number of Alien Registrations in Japan (2007-2011)**

| | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| China | 606,889 | 655,377 | 680,518 | 687,156 | 674,879 |
| South Korea | 593,489 | 589,239 | 578,495 | 565,989 | 545,401 |
| Philippines | 202,592 | 210,617 | 211,716 | 210,181 | 209,376 |
| Brazil | 316,967 | 312,582 | 267,456 | 230,552 | 210,032 |

Source: Compiled statistics from the 2012 Immigration Control Report (MOJ 2012: 118-128)

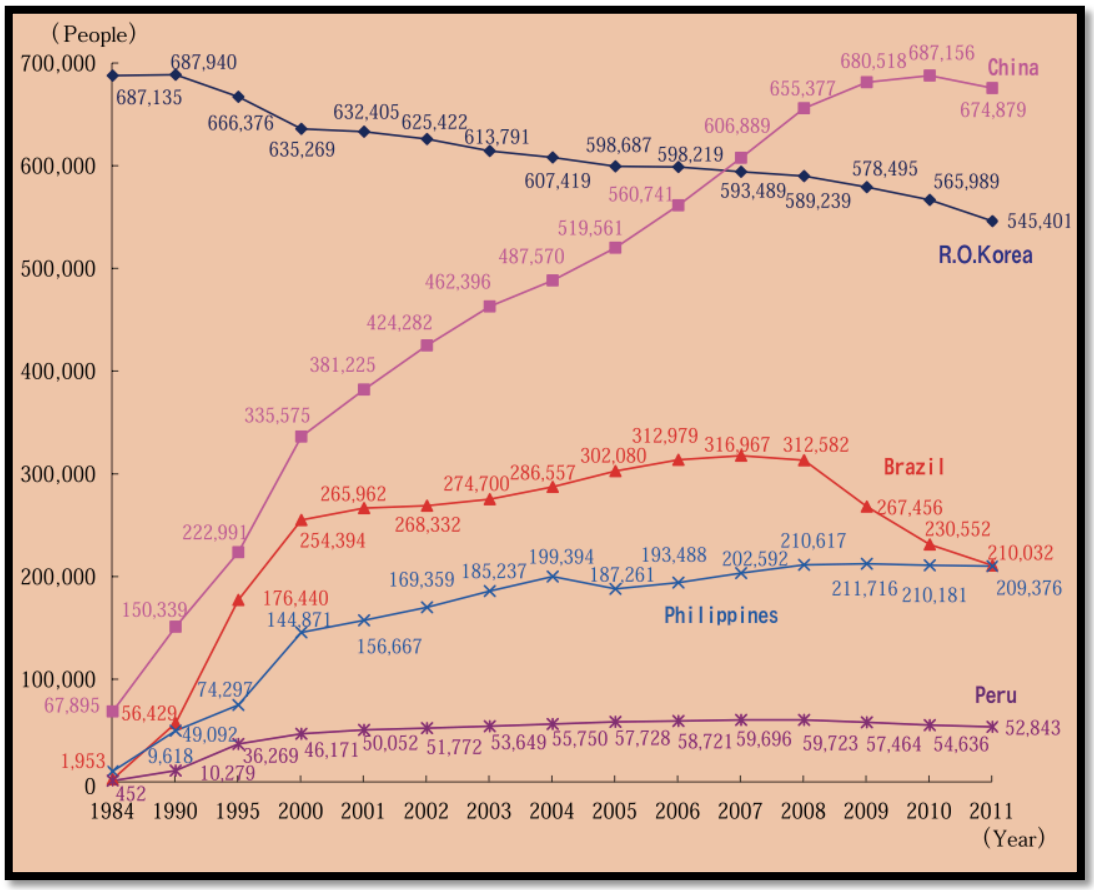
Indeed, the previous literature on Filipinos in Japan has focused on mostly on the feminization of Filipino migration to Japan and their vulnerability due to their work type and contractual nature of their work visa statuses. While the initial wave of Filipino migration to Japan were made up of musicians, vaudeville performers and students (Yu-Jose 2007), it was only during Japan's economic boom of the 1980's that Filipino migrants came in large numbers. Consisting of mostly undocumented construction workers and the emerging niche market of entertainers, Filipinos were included in the marginalized yet much needed 3K work sectors: jobs described as being *Kitanai* (dirty), *Kitsui* (difficult), and *Kiken* (dangerous). Although initially not much discussed, it was the controversial death of Maricris Sioson, that the Filipino public grew an interest to the plight and situations of Filipinos in Japan.[63] During this period, migrant scholarship included Ballescas' pioneering study of Filipino entertainers in Japan (1992), David's discussion on the vulnerability of the Filipino community (1991) and the secret life of the undocumented migrant worker (Ventura 2006). On the other end, various scholars discuss the role of the emerging migrant civil society, which was led by Japanese organized trade unions, NGOs and advocacy groups to fight to for the rights of Filipinos and other disenfranchised foreign migrants (Douglass and Roberts 2003, Ball and Piper 2002).

As Japan becomes a primary destination for Filipino migrants, Tigno explains that

[63] Maricris Sioson was a Filipino entertainer who was murdered in suspicious circumstances. According to news accounts, she was allegedly killed by *Yakuza* gang members and died from violent sword wounds. However, officially medical and police reports deemed that she died from natural causes. Her controversial death led the Japayuki discourse to the popular Philippine consciousness, leading to several Japayuki themed television programs and movies. For more details, see Faier (2009) and Ballescas (1992).

their movement is remarkable in at least four ways. First, he mentions about the significant increase in the number of Filipinos entering Japan since the 1980s. While there were only 49,000 Filipinos in 1990, this figure increases threefold to 176,000 five years later. Second, unlike their Chinese and Korean counterparts, Filipino migrants are known as "new-comers", which included the new wave of migrants who entered Japan during its rapid economic growth during the 1980s. Third, unlike Latin American migrants, the majority of Filipinos is not "*nikkeijin*"(literally of Japanese descent) and as such can only enter Japan as temporary workers. Fourth, Filipino migration to Japan is largely composed of female workers, wherein the male-female ratio in 2000 was 1 male to 4.6 females (2008: 22). And yet, in spite of the challenges faced by the Filipino migrant in Japan and the dominance of sensationalist mass media images highlighting the dark side of Filipino entertainer migration to Japan (Faier 2009: 91), Filipino migration to Japan continued, especially as the deployment of entertainers reached a peak with 50,691 new entrants in 2004 (MOJ 2009a).

**Figure 5.1. Changes in the Number of Foreign Nationals in Japan (1986-2011)**




Source: Chart 13 from the Immigration Control 2012 Report (MOJ 2012: 24).

To understand the context of Filipino migration to Japan, it is also important to discuss the prevailing policies and approaches implemented by the Japanese state and its migrant civil society movement. Discussing the typologies of migrant incorporation models, Castles explains that migrant receiving countries either follow the models of assimilation, differential exclusion, and multiculturalism. Based from this typology, Japan follows the model of differential exclusion towards most of its migrant labor during the height of its economic expansion, which is defined as accepting immigrants only within strict and functional limits (2004). Expounding on these modes of incorporation, Kondo explains that there are three distinct periods of Japan migration policies. The first was the "Exclusion, discrimination and assimilation stage (1945-1979)" which refers to Japan's exclusionary policies towards migrant laborers, entertainers, *Nikkeijin* (migrants of Japanese descent) and forced assimilation toward its *Zainichi* (resident) Korean and Chinese population. As Japan's economy grew and within the context of its globalizing economy, it adopted a policy of "Equality and Internationalization (1980-1989)" to reflect its growing standing in the international community and to become more international by encouraging the migration of skilled migrant workers, particularly in the business, trade and education sectors. With the growing flow of its unskilled migrant workers, the settling of its Nikkeijin communities, the rising number of international marriages and the coming of the newer skilled workers, Japan then shifted toward policies of "Settlement and Multicultural Living-Together (1990-onwards)" (Kondo 2008: 37).

Initially started by local governments with large concentrations of foreign residents, the concept of multiculturalism and multicultural living-together (多文化共生) expanded and were founded on principles of inclusion and pluralism so that foreign residents can realize their rights and fulfill their obligations as municipal residents (Nagy 2009: 168). Indeed while most of the recent literature on Japanese migration policies centered on Japan moving toward a multicultural society (Akashi 2009, Kondo 2008, Debito 2007, Douglass 2003, Komai 2001), its focus has always been how the multiculturalism movement has affected and shaped the various migrant groups.

While previous literature has focused on how the Filipino community was shaped by Japan's migration policies and its drive towards multiculturalism, this chapter will

highlight how the Filipino community exhibit agency by transcending images of victimhood and engages with Japan' multiculturalism movement as an integral manifestation of demotic nationalism.

### 5.2. Diaspora Nationalism among Filipinos in Japan

In discussing the typology and the main features of the different diaspora nationalisms, this research posits that their diverging approaches can be discerned by how these various questions are answered: "How is Filipino nationalism understood and practiced by the Filipino diaspora in Japan?" "How do the discourses of the *Bagong Bayani* and *Balikbayan* resonate among them?", "How do they interact with the Philippine state, various migrant advocacy groups and their own local migrant communities in Japan?", "How does the Filipino diaspora maintain ties to their families and home communities in the homeland?", and "Are they concerned with the state of affairs and do they want to contribute to the development of the nation?"

While the diaspora nationalisms will continually be discussed and explained in the later sections of this chapter, this subsection will look in detail on the nuances and aspects of these typologies in order to highlight their broad thematic differences and approaches.

The major themes of the diaspora nationalisms will be fleshed out through the discussions and opinions shared with various key informants, who are either experts or persons with on the ground experience, and fieldwork data observations conducted by the researcher since 2009. These informants and fieldwork data came from several independent data gathering sessions and also from a joint research project on Filipino Assistant Language Teachers (ALT) with Ballescas which led to a research article entitled: "Engaging Multiculturalism from Below: The Case of Filipino Assistant Language Teachers in Japan" (2010). Some of these key informants include:[64]

Clarence Santiago, the former head of the Center for Japanese Filipino Families (CJFF), a Filipino NGO that provides services and advocacy work for long-term residents

[64] The respondents' names are pseudonyms. For a more detailed discussion on the profile of the key respondents, see the appendix section of this dissertation.

in Japan, Japanese-Filipino youth and the Filipino victims of the March 11, 2011 Tsunami and Nuclear Disaster in the Tohoku region. Juan Perez, a former activist from the Philippines who is now in Japan as a part-time laborer and cultural worker with ties to both Filipino and Japanese advocacy groups in Japan. Matthew Salvador, a long-time Filipino English teacher who specializes in childrens' English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and is an experienced trainer of foreign and Filipino Assistant Language Teachers (ALT) in Japan. Leslie Chua, the former project coordinator and head of the gender and counseling program of the Research Center for Philippine Concerns (RCPC) and also the founder of the *Zainichi Firipin Josei Network* during her stay in Japan from 1987 until 1998.

For the section focusing on Filipino ALTs meanwhile, the key respondents include: Ms. Felicidad Garcia, a Filipino ALT working with the local board of education (BOE) of Tsukuba, Ibaraki. Mr. Bernard Reyes, a Filipino ALT working in elementary schools in Tsuchiura, hired under a placement agency. Mr. John Torres, a former Filipino ALT who was is now based in Canada. Ms. Nancy Guevarra, a former Filipino ALT who is now based in New Zealand.

### 5.2.1. Official Nationalism

As discussed in chapters two and three, official nationalism is promoted and directed towards the Filipino diaspora through its policies of labor export and the discourses of the *Bagong Bayani* and *Balikbayan*. The main elements of official nationalism includes: a) working abroad as a sacrifice for the nation and the migrant's family, b) helping the homeland through sending of remittances, investments and philanthropic donations and c) maintaining the good name and image of the Filipino while working abroad.

While the promotion of official nationalist discourse is prevalent in Hong Kong and in the various homeland communities, as discussed in chapters five and six, the Filipino diaspora in Japan presents an interesting contrast on how official nationalism is promoted compared with other traditional labor destinations such as in Hong Kong, Singapore, and the Middle East. Indeed, while the representations of the *Bagong Bayani* are abound with mass media images of hardworking construction laborers to Saudi

Arabia and the sacrifices of the domestic helper in Hong Kong, the Filipino migrant to Japan are not represented in such a manner. While this aspect will be discussed further in section 4.4, it is suffice to say that the work context and the *Japayuki* discourse plays a big role in the muted promotion of the *Bagong Bayani* among Filipinos in Japan.

#### 5.2.1.1. Context of the *Bagong Bayani* and the *Japayuki*

In discussing the official nationalism on Filipino migration to Japan, one could not point out to any particular policy orientation, rather the state mostly followed its goal of sending migrant workers to particular labor markets and in the case of worker abuse, offer solutions that are reactive rather than proactive that does not necessarily address the underlying issues of worker vulnerability.

The growth of Filipino entertainer migration to Japan coincided with the decline of Japanese sex tourism in Southeast Asia during the 1980's and the growing demand for foreign labor in its entertainment industry. Employed in what is called the *mizushobai* (water trade) sector, Filipino entertainers worked in nightclubs and bars, doing various dance routines while at the same time, entertaining and socializing with the clientele over drinks and small talk. Although many activists and critics point out to the problems of human trafficking and prostitution among the entertainers, we have to point out that entertainers are themselves not prostitutes. In her discussion of Filipino entertainers in Nagano, Faier reiterates that in hostess bars, Japanese men are not paying for sex or for "the women," but for eroticization of the man, for his projection as a powerful and desirable male. Thus while hostesses are performing sexualized labor, they do not necessarily offer sexual services. Rather, they are paid to make men feel special, at ease, and indulged, or to "feel like a man". This distinction between bar work and prostitution was crucial to the Filipina women (2009:42).

As the entertainment industry in Japan grew and the demand and flows of Filipino entertainers increased, various social issues came up, namely that of contractual violations, debt bondage with the Filipino and Japanese recruiters, sexual abuse and with the highly cyclical nature of their six-month entertainment visa and contract, most entertainers were encouraged to either find Japanese male partners for marriage or on the other hand, to become undocumented workers to avoid the problems of contract

non-renewal and the burden of another round of placement fees (Takeda 2008, Ballescas 1992). Throughout the years, the Philippine state maintained its policies of sending Filipino entertainers to Japan but had to revise its recruitment rules and regulations following the controversial case of Maricris Sioson on 1991 and criticisms of human trafficking until the 1990's. Interventions included the increasing of minimum age for entertainer work and cracking down on underage recruitment.

A key theme in discussions of official nationalism is the issue of maintaining proper images of the Filipino people and nation while the migrants are working abroad. As more and more Filipino and Southeast Asian entertainers entered Japan, they became known as *Japayuki* and with it the discourse of shame and vulnerability. Literally "one who has traveled to Japan," the *Japayuki* discourse narrative was first popularized by Tetsuo Yamatani, a Japanese freelance writer and documentary film maker, who used it in his 1983 film *Japayukisan: Tonan Ajia kara no dekasegi shofutachi* (Japayukisan: Migrant Prostitutes from Southeast Asia). Yamatani meant to draw attention to the exploitation of these women on account of unequal relations between Japan and their countries of origin. However he made this point in part by arguing that the large number of migrant women coming to Japan from the Philippines stood as a testimony to the Philippines' lagging modernity (Faier 2009:91).[65]

As more and more Filipino entertainers arrived during the bubble economy years and reached its peak at 2004, the *Japayuki* san discourse has been so influential that it has shaped popular discourses and brought a negative outlook towards Filipino entertainers. As the term Japayuki san widely came to be associated to Filipina women and despite laws prohibiting entertainers from engaging in commercial sexual relations (and the fact that many did not), popular media often suggested that all Filipina women in Japan were prostitutes and thus immoral, opportunistic, backwards, greedy, desperate, and criminal. In the Philippines, too, women who went to Japan to work as entertainers were widely viewed as immoral and desperate: willing to do anything for money (Faier 2009:91). Indeed during the height of entertainer migration to Japan, the

[65] The expression recalls the *Karayukisan* (literally "one who has traveled to China"), those Japanese women who from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century were sent abroad as prostitutes to financially assist their natal families and further the nascent Japanese state's development efforts (Faier 2009:91).

discourse of the *Japayuki* as being desperate and pitiful victims was perpetuated through Philippine mass media which brought the sensationalist products such as the TV show "*Japayuki: Luha at Tagumpay*" [66] (Tears and Triumphs) and the 1993 biopic "Maricris Sioson: *Japayuki*". Discussing how such mass media productions during the 1990's featuring the sensationalist and controversial deaths of OFWs, Rafael argues that such movies aimed to produce "less a nation of mourners, but rather an audience of consumers" (2000: 224).

Furthermore, as the customers accept such stereotypes as true, and as stereotyping persists, and Filipino migrant workers have to fight against, or live with, stereotypes and discrimination in Japanese society everyday (Takeda 2008:29). Japanese mass media plays a significant role in perpetuating the image of the victimized *Japayuki* san, as journalistic documentaries tend to be sensational appeals to curiosity, and prompt both sympathy and revulsion toward these Asian women. The public perceives *Japayuki* san less as persons and more as sex objects, and associates them with their male clients and underworld employers (Yamanaka 1993:83). As such entertainers face the stigma of the *Japayuki* narrative both in their host and home countries.

With growing social and gender issues brought forth by the migration of entertainers, both the Japanese and Philippine government attempted to address this by changing age requirements and more regulation towards the hiring of new entertainers. This included renaming Filipino entertainers as Overseas Performing Artists (OPA) of which they are required to have an Artist Record Book (ARB), a passport like document, which proves their experience in professional stints abroad. Nonetheless, these actions were often shortsighted and didn't address the fundamental issues and concerns of the entertainers (Takeda 2008, San Jose 2004). [67] This belated attention suggests that both

[66] This television show was famous for its opening theme song which was sang to the nursery tune "London Bridge is Falling Down", with the following lyrics:
*Moshi moshi, ano ne*, (hello, hello)
*Gusto mo trabaho*, (you want work)
*Entertainer sa Japan, Japayuki*! (as an entertainer in Japan)

[67] While the ARB policy had good intentions of proving the professionalism of the Filipino entertainer and regulating unskilled and under aged applicants, for the majority of Filipino

racism and sexism play a role in determining policy priorities, and that women's' work in the leisure industry is regarded not as proper employment but as immoral activity akin to crime (Yamanaka 1993: 82).

Discussing the effect of the social stigma attached to entertainers as a central reason behind their marginalization, Parrenas cites the case of an Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) welfare officer based in the Philippine embassy in Tokyo, who prioritizes members of the community other than entertainers (for example wives and domestic workers) to 'uplift the image of the Filipino community' (2010).[68] She explains that:

> In its quest to improve the public image of Filipinos, OWWA sees it as a priority to inform the public that not all Filipinos in Japan are entertainers, which we could speculate to mean that not all Filipinos are sexually loose women. The dismissal of entertainers as a public embarrassment for the identity of the nation indicates not only the marginal status of entertainers in the community, but more importantly it tells us that OWWA, at least under the leadership of the welfare officer during my field research, had not addressed the needs of one of its largest constituents in Tokyo (2010: 316).

This shows that in practice, the state often marginalizes and fails to reach out to their constituents and often prioritizes improving the 'image of the Filipino overseas community', until such a time that the migrants are already in real danger or in need of help. During times of need, it is quite common for Philippine embassy staff to forward calls for help to their partner NGOs instead of directly helping them.

What this section has shown us is that the state seems to turn its back on the stories and narratives related to the Japayuki discourse and although they do address these issues through policy changes, it is often reactive rather than proactive. Indeed, it is ironic that the stopping of the flow of entertainers to Japan was not brought about by policy changes by the Japanese or Philippine government, but rather by the United

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entertainers, they found this policy as adding another layer to their recruitment woes and further increasing their recruitment fees (San Jose 2004).

[68] As explained in the previous chapters, the OWWA is the designated government agency assigned to protect and promote the welfare and wellbeing of Filipino migrants and their dependents, with its operating budget not coming form the Philippine government but from the annual subscription collected from OFWs deployed by the government.

States government. It was only when Japan was ranked as a Tier 2 Watch List country[69] under the 2004 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report that international pressure made the Japanese government implement the Action Plan of Measure to Combat Trafficking in Persons in 2005 (Kondo 2008: 33).[70] Japan-bound entertainers are required to have professional work experience outside Japan, or a 2-year academic training before they can be issued entertainer visas. In lieu of Philippine government-issued certificates, Japan-bound entertainers must present a "club cert" or certification as proof that they have the required professional work experience as entertainers prior to their deployment in Japan (Takeda 2008:10-11). This policy development, also known as the "entertainer ban of 2005" led to the sudden decrease of new entertainers to Japan from a peak of 82,741 in 2004 to just 3,185 in 2008 and shifted focus toward marriage among Filipinos and Japanese spouses and their eventual settlement. This issue and the underlying themes behind it will be discussed in the later sections of this chapter.

#### 5.2.1.2. Toward Opening Labor Markets

Other than discussing the discourse and image of the Philippines in Japan, another aspect in which policies reflecting official nationalism relates to the seeking of new labor markets to Japan. Indeed, while the state since the Marcos period has been aggressive in searching for new labor markets, the state has been subdued when it comes to the issue of entertainer migration to Japan. Following a laissez-faire approach, they simply allow the entertainment and recruitment industries to continue the flow of entertainers to Japan. Indeed, while the state has always prided its migrant sons and daughters as the Bagong Bayani when they work as domestic helpers and construction workers, they often keep quiet or shy away from discussions on the Filipina entertainer. In particular Chua, a former project coordinator and head of the gender and counseling program of the Research Center for Philippine Concerns (RCPC) and migrant rights

[69] Japan has constantly been a Tier 2 country but was demoted in 2004 into a Tier 2 watch List country, defined as "Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the Act's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards" (US TIP 2004:29).

[70] Japan was already criticized of human trafficking in the previous years which led to several interventions by the Philippine and Japanese governments, namely the increasing of the age limit for entertainers, vigilance against illegal recruitment in the Philippines and the drive to "professionalize" entertainment work through the Artist Record Book (ARB) certification process and the labeling of entertainers as Overseas Performing Artists (OPA) (Takeda 2008, San Jose 2004).

activist in Japan from 1987 until 1998, opines that the Philippine state is in fact the "biggest pimp of the sex trade and human trafficking" but at the same time shies away from discussions on the plight of entertainers. When asked on how the state promotes the *Bagong Bayani* in Asia, she insists that Filipina migrants in Japan stood in contrast to the much-heralded Bagong Bayani in Hong Kong or in the Middle East. Instead she argues that the Philippine state views the Filipina entertainer as the "prostituted daughter" and as such is a source shame.[71] Indeed, the state contradicts itself when it promotes the hard work and sacrifice of the *Bagong Bayani* in Hong Kong and in the Middle East while at the same time hides the shameful existence of the Filipina entertainer.

Due to the specific conditions and work context of Filipino migrants in Japan, the state has not been able to aggressively promote the narrative and discourse of the *Bagong Bayani*. However, things started to change during the Arroyo administration when they began to push for the opening of new labor markets in Japan, particularly in the health sector. One such initiative is the promotion and sending of nurses and caregiver trainees to Japan under the Japan-Philippine Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) which they hope will in the long-term be a new migration stream and labor opportunity for its growing skilled labor, particularly in the booming health care migration (Ballescas 2010, 2009, 2007) and Information Technology (IT) and the education sector (Philstar 2011).[72] Labor Attaché of the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo Reydeluz D. Conferido describes the government's hope that the eventual ratification of the JPEPA would usher a new era for Philippine labor deployment. Citing the results of an Overseas Labor Officers' Conference meeting, Conferido emphasizes that:

> Marketing efforts should pursue higher end opportunities for our people to provide alternative employment opportunities away from vulnerable occupations. This means that we should probably look more for quality, rather than quantity of deployment (Philippines Today 2007).

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[71] Interview with Chua 2012.

[72] Some research and informal discussions among JPEPA policy experts seems to suggest that the passing of the MNP provision of the JPEPA was due to a concession by the Japanese government to include provisions on nurse and caregiver work opportunities just to pass the more important trade and financial provisions of the JPEPA. According to some sources, it would seem that although the Japanese medical sector are in need of health care workers, they are still quite slow in warming to the idea of the opening up of labor markets in the country (Ballescas 2009a).

After discussing how the state through its policies of 'ignoring' the *Japayuki* discourse and the search for new labor markets to Japan as manifestations of official nationalism, the next section will then discuss the practice of alternative nationalism by various civil society groups, which stands contrast to the activities and character of migrant advocacy groups in Hong Kong.

### 5.2.2. Alternative Nationalism

As discussed in chapters two and three, although alternative nationalism has two sub-types, they share common features, namely: a) an alternative nationalist model distinct from the official nationalism with its roots from the National Democratic movement (ND), b) being critical to the state's labor export policies and failure to provide protection to migrants, c) believing that the best way to serve the country is by being politically active and being critical of the state's policies on migration and development.

However, whenever the discussion of migrant advocacy in East Asia is raised, the Filipino migrant advocacy in Japan often stands in contrast to the highly visible and active networks in Hong Kong. As such one could ask, "Why are the Filipino migrant networks in Japan, particularly those following the Alternative Nationalism perspective, relatively weaker?" In order to explore these themes on alternative nationalism in Japan, this research asks the opinions and experiences of three Filipino activists and NGO workers who have been active in Japan. They are Santiago, the head of the Center for Japanese Filipino Families (CJFF); Perez, a former activist and a cultural worker; and Chua, the former project coordinator at the Research Center for Philippine Concerns (RCPC) and founder of the *Zainichi Firipin Josei Network* during her stay in Japan from 1987 until 1998.

Although Filipino migrant NGOs are more service oriented rather than advocacy oriented, there were some notable advocacy campaigns that were launched in Japan. Some of these campaigns were directed toward the Philippine state, such as the advocacy against the provisions of Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement,

the protest against the rise of extra-judicial killings in the Philippines since the 2000s[73] and the issue of Fujimi property sale, a Philippine patrimonial land which as part of the Philippine embassy in Tokyo properties, that was put up for auction in a non-transparent manner (PDI 2010).[74] While these protest actions were directed towards the Philippine state, Chua recalls the active participation and organizing of various Filipino-Japan NGOs in several mass movements directed toward Japan in 1997-1998, against the representation of gender images on the Filipina *Japayuki*, which was highlighted by the popularity of Ruby Morena, a former entertainer who became popular in Japanese television by doing various roles of the vulnerable *Japayuki* san.[75]

While the above-mentioned campaigns also made some headway in Japanese society, the Filipino advocacy community in Japan was not known for its mass protest and advocacy campaigns. One of the main reasons is the geographic and temporal dimension, which is very specific in the context of Filipino migration to Japan.

#### 5.2.2.1. A Different Context

As explained earlier, majority of migrants in Japan who came during the 1980's and 1990's were either undocumented workers working in the construction sector or entertainers. As such, the focus of campaigns by NGOs had a strong migrant protection and gender components focus. Unlike the foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong who enjoy mandatory day-offs, it is easier for them to organize and gather themselves for both social events; migrant rights organizing or advocacy campaigns. In contrast, the majority of Filipino migrants in Japan are employed in the entertainment industry in which their migrant experiences are highly mobile and temporal. This is due to various factors such as: entertainers don't have any designated day-offs, their working period is from late evening until the early hours of the morning, their contracts are only for six

[73] The issue of extra-judicial killings has been a big concern especially for activists and journalists since they were the ones frequently targeted. The 2000's saw extra-judicial killings have a marked increased from the time of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo until the present (McGeown 2011).

[74] According to Santiago, the protesters against the sale of the Fujimi property sale had a direct contact from then Ambassador Domingo Siazon, who was personally against the planned sale of the property, who informed then on the latest updates of the incident who tacitly supported their protest actions in front of the embassy. He mentions that it was Mikey Arroyo, son of the former President Arroyo, who was allegedly behind the shady negotiations of the sale of the property (Interview with Santiago 2012).

[75] Interview with Chua 2012.

months and after they get their new contracts, they will probably be assigned to a totally different work place within Japan (Faier 2009, San Jose 2004).[76]

These factors come together in making the entertainers having a hard time creating support networks other than their direct friends within their work area or the occasional contacts they create whenever they visit the church during their free days (Takahata & Vilog 2012a, Mateo 2003). Discussing the social distance between the Filipina entertainers and other members of the Filipino community in Japan, Parrenas (2010) explains that due to the nature of their work, in which they work late at night until the early morning, frequently have a hard time to socialize with other Filipinos at church even during Sundays, and with their work contracts set for only six months; Filipina entertainers are temporally, socially, and spatially segregated with the Filipino community at large. Citing the case of hometown associations (HTAs) on why they have not reached out to migrant entertainers, the reasoning of various community leaders was that entertainers are only in Japan for six months. She points out that the tendency of community advocate groups to ignore the needs of entertainers shows that their temporal segregation inadvertently results in their social segregation, further encouraging their homeward bound orientation and consequently their limited integration (315).

Perhaps a notable exemption in terms of a specific community that transcended the geographic limitations is the case of the Filipino Migrant Center, which is based on the Sakai district of Nagoya.[77] As explained by Takahata's studies on the interactions between Filipino and Japanese NGOs in building multicultural initiatives in Nagoya

[76] Parrenas explains that rarely do entertainers return to the same club for their next contract, as management prefer to offer customers a fresh batch of new hostesses to meet on a regular basis (2010: 309).

[77] The FMC is a member of the Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM); a Hong Kong based Asian coalition of Filipino migrant advocacy organizations. During the 1980's, the Filipino community Japan was already showing signs of settlement and social cohesion, as such it was seen as a possible hub for Filipino migrant advocacy in Asia, particularly for OFWs in Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong and Japan. During this period, Japan was seen as the potential headquarters by the ND movement for their international work of Left solidarity and migrant organizing during the 1970's and 1980's. However the ND movement decided to shift toward Hong Kong and became the focal point of migrant advocacy in Asia as shown by the founding of the APMMF (Alcid 2006). However as the years passed, Hong Kong became the forefront of Filipino migrant advocacy not only in Asia, but also for all Filipino migrant workers across the world.

(2012b, 2007), the geographic and spatial concentration of Filipino settled migrants and workers in the Sakai district has led to a vibrant interactions which seem to reflect some patterns of mass organizing similar to the experience in Hong Kong.

#### 5.2.2.2. Dominance of Japanese NGOs

Another theme mentioned by the key respondents is the primacy of Japanese NGOs in service and advocacy activities in Japan. Indeed the literature on Japanese migrant advocacy supports this assumption. While Filipinos in Hong Kong are in the forefront of migrant activism (Hsia 2009), migrant activism in Japan was led by the campaigns and advocacy of the Zainichi (resident foreigners) Korean and Chinese with the Latin American *Nikkeijin* communities (Chung 2010, Yamanaka 2004, 2003). Furthermore, unlike in Hong Kong migrant advocacy campaigns that are led by migrants themselves, Japan follows the model of migrant advocacy NGOs led by concerned locals (Rother 2009:126).

It is in this context that migrant sector NGOs are more service rather than advocacy oriented. Some of these NGOs include: church-based NGOs such as the Urawa Open House and the Catholic Tokyo International Center (CTIC); gender-oriented NGOs and temporary shelters such as the *Maligaya House* (House of Joy) in Tokyo and Philippine based counterparts such as Development Action Women's Network (DAWN) and the *Batis* Aware Center; the Philippine Nikkeijin Legal Support Center (PNLSC) for Filipinos of Japanese descent and labor-oriented NGOs such as the pioneering but now defunct *Kalabaw no Kai*, and the Filipino Migrant Center (FMC) in Nagoya.

#### 5.2.2.3. Main Characteristics of Filipino Advocacy Groups in Japan

After discussing the context, which shapes the conditions of Filipino migrant advocacy groups in Japan, this section will then discuss their main characteristics. One of the observable differences of Filipino advocacy groups in Japan compared to those in Hong Kong is that although there is an ideological split which led to the sub-types of the revolutionary approach (RA) and the radical democratic approach (RD) in the alternative nationalist movement, this split doesn't have a big effect among Filipino migrant advocates in Japan. In explaining why this is not a big issue among advocates in Japan, the three respondents mentioned that the immediate needs of the NGOs and their

migrant clients are more important. Indeed, Perez explains while he and Santiago were of different political leanings back home, their ideological differences didn't prevent him from working with him at Center for Japanese Filipino Families (CJFF) as a volunteer staff for a year. Indeed he mentions that their common goal to help the Filipino community in Japan transcends their original political views.[78] Chua also reiterates their opinions, saying that advocacy work and the conditions of the Filipino migrants in Japan are so difficult that their organizations did not have time to dwell on their original ideological differences.[79]

Santiago traces the history of Filipino advocacy organizations in Japan, explaining that it used to be in the forefront of Filipino migrant and human rights campaigns in Asia during the Marcos period under the *Solidaridad* Movement.[80] As the national democracy movement (ND) experienced their ideological split in 1990s, the main focal point of migrant advocacy has already shifted to Hong Kong and due to the geographic and logistical difficulties of advocacy work during this period, migrant advocacy organizations could not afford to let their differences interfere with the needs of the migrants. He mentions the existence of NETFIL or the Network of Filipino Development Workers, a working group consisting of various missionaries and migrant service providers in Japan. While consisting of various persons from different backgrounds, they do not let their ideological and political leanings interfere with their work. Lastly, Santiago also mentions that although ideological differences may not have an impact, personality and management differences do arise leading to some groups to not work with each other.[81]

#### 5.2.2.4. Dynamics and Tensions between Japanese and Filipino Migrant NGOs

In discussing the dynamics between Japanese and Filipino migrant advocacy groups in Japan, Santiago explains why Filipino advocacy groups are not politicized unlike the Filipino advocacy groups in Hong Kong-based. He points out that most of the

[78] Interview with Perez 2012. He was a former member of the Sanlakas youth, a rejectionist organization; while Santiago used to be attached to the Mission for Filipino Migrant Workers (MFMW) at Hong Kong, a reaffirmist organization, before coming to Japan.

[79] Interview with Chua 2012.

[80] The term "Solidaridad" (solidarity) evokes the long-distance advocacy campaigns of the original Filipino nationalists in Europe during the Spanish colonial period.

[81] Interview with Santiago 2012.

Filipino migrants NGOs are based and sponsored in churches.[82] Since they depend on these churches to sponsor and fund their activities in behalf of their ministries, they carry the names and reputations of their churches, and as such, they can't be outright political nor confrontational in their activities.

While their dependency to apolitical religious groups play a big role in shaping their activities in Japan, that doesn't explain the dynamics of migrant NGOs in Japan since even Filipino migrant advocacy groups in Hong Kong also are based in religious institutions.[83] However one telling factor that distinguishes the Filipino migrant NGOs in Japan is their specific interactions with their local Japanese NGO counterparts. As reflected in the academic literature, Filipino migrants NGOs are in the forefront of migrant rights advocacy in Hong Kong, often leading and setting the example with other ethnic migrant groups and even with their local Hong Kong counterparts (Hsia 2009, Rother 2009c). Migrant advocacy in Japan meanwhile, is led by concerned Japanese locals while among the ethnic groups; it was traditionally the *Zainichi* Korean and Chinese who led the migrant activism movement since the 1950s and the Brazilian *Nikkeijin* since the 1990s (Chung 2010, Tsuda 2009, 2003). Reflecting on this situation, Santiago is critical on the dominant role of the local Japanese migrant NGOs, which he describes as having a "big brother complex":

> "Japanese NGOs have a big brother complex in that they don't allow any initiative from foreign-organized NGOs. For example, if there is a planned protest movement for migrants, instead of working in consultation with these foreign NGOs, they simply ask: 'what do you need? Don't worry, we will take care of it. Just come tomorrow and all the logistics will be taken cared of'".[84]

In essence, Santiago is critical of the top-down approach used by their Japanese counterparts in their campaigns and advocacy work for Filipino migrants in Japan. He argues that Japanese NGOs doesn't consider the voices and perspectives of Filipino activists. Furthermore, because of this top-down approach, Filipino organizations become more dependent to their Japanese counterparts due to the various difficulties

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[82] Some of these migrant NGOs include the CJFF and the RCPC that is housed by the United Christian Churches of Japan (UCCJ), the Urawa Open House through the Catholic Archdiocese of Chiba, and KAPATIRAN (brotherhood) through the auspices of the Anglican Church.

[83] The Mission for Migrant Workers (MFMW), Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM) and Bethune House, established migrant advocacy and service NGOs belonging to the RA cluster, are all housed by the various Christian and Anglican churches in Hong Kong.

[84] Interview with Santiago 2012.

they face, such as the language and cultural barriers of working in Japan and adjusting to the Japanese way of doing advocacy work. As such, he takes pride in his work with the CJFF since his organization always tries to be more independent with their Japanese NGO counterparts.

As Santiago reflects on his experience as a migrant advocate in Japan since the 2000's, Chua also highlights similar themes and views on the dynamics of Filipino and Japanese NGOs in Japan during her advocacy campaigns from the 1980's and 1990's. With her background and personal goal to promote gender advocacy in Japan, Chua points out to dynamics of getting funding for migrant services in her work at the NRCF. She explains that while she wants to go other activities that concentrate on the gender and empowerment aspects of her advocacy work, the funding sources in Japan want the NRCF to concentrate on migrant and women intervention. She explains that it is easier to get funding in Japan for such "first-aid" and first-response activities such as their migrant intervention hotline and counseling services. When she tried to expand towards gender education and more substantive women organizing, she began to have conflicts with her Japanese counterparts, since they prefer to fund activities produces quick and easily discernable results.[85]

While such concerns were very important for her, Chua is most critical on how the migrant women were viewed and seen by their Japanese counterparts. Indeed, while her Japanese counterparts consisted of concerned women's groups and Christian women's organizations, they still view the migrant women as simply victims that were forced to go to Japan due to their hard circumstances in the Philippine homeland. With this view, they see the women as victims that have to be intervened and finally "deported" and expatriated back to the Philippines.[86] Indeed, while the views of her Japanese counterparts have merit, she believes that this perpetuates the narrative of the Filipina as *Japayuki*, a vulnerable victim that needs to be helped and simply ought to be brought back to the homeland. Due to her criticism of this approach towards Filipina women, she has drawn the ire of both Japanese and Filipino activists in her migrant

[85] Interview with Chua 2012.

[86] The term “deported” was the term used by Chua during the interview to describe the goals of the Japanese networks, suggesting a strong and value-laden concept.

advocacy networks, leading even her Filipino activist from the larger ND movement in the Philippines to question her activities and focus. She explains that she was scolded and told to: "Concentrate on your work on migrant services and not on other issues related to gender organizing. You are already antagonizing the Japanese! You should concentrate on working with them and also getting funding for the political movement at home!"[87]

#### 5.2.2.5. Highlighting Vulnerability and Victimhood

As expressed by Chua, the narrative of the *Japayuki* plays a big role in shaping the approaches and strategies employed by the migrant advocacy groups, and yet as she clearly argues, it had the unintended consequence of merely perpetuating the problems of vulnerability. Furthermore, this approach also does not give credence to the agency of the migrant women nor the underlying causes in the host Japanese society that led to the entertainment industry and the demand for unskilled labor during the 1980's until the 1990's. Chua already had attempted to address the issues of gender and vulnerability using her own approach and agenda. She describes her campaign as not focusing on the victims nor their victimhood, rather she wants the women to transcend their problems and exhibit agency by moving beyond the narrative of victimization. She describes this as "moving beyond the "*kaawa-awa*" (pitiful) narrative which aims for the women to become aware of their real situations and not just dwell on their victimhood.[88] This was culminated when she discontinued her work at the RCPC and created her own advocacy network, the *Zainichi Firipin Josei Network*.

### 5.2.3. Demotic Nationalism

Based from the previous chapters, we explain that demotic nationalism as a form of diaspora nationalism that explores how migrants understand and practice nationalism, particularly as directed towards them by the state and political advocacy groups. We explained that this typology is important in that most of the literature has shown how the state and advocacy groups have taken for granted the voice of the migrants and their agency in interpreting the conflicting nationalisms directed towards them. Furthermore, the typologies of diaspora nationalisms proposed by this thesis also

[87] Interview with Chua 2012.
[88] Interview with Chua 2012.

works as a helpful framework to analyze the dominant discourses promoted by the state and advocacy groups, since the demotic dimension of nationalisms acts as counter - dominant to those of the state and civil society groups. Lastly, we also explain that the origin of demotic nationalism is based on the Filipino diaspora experience as a whole, in which we explain that the culture of migration together with the Filipino diaspora experience has led to a new form of diaspora nationalism.

In summary, we explain that the three main features of demotic nationalism are: a) it is the negotiated and popular understanding of the dominant discourses directed towards the migrants by the state and advocacy groups, b) it is a new basis of nationalism which is distinct from the diverging versions promoted by the state and advocacy groups, but rather based on the shared lived experiences of the diaspora, and lastly c) demotic nationalism reflects migrant agency through their instrumental and pragmatic thinking which goes beyond the assumptions of the state and advocacy groups. After discussing the main features of demotic nationalism, this sub-section will discuss some of the major themes as related to how migrant groups in Japan shows the primacy of demotic nationalism, namely that of the practice of long-distance nationalism, criticisms against the *Bagong Bayani* discourse, pragmatism among migrants, how migrants transcend victimhood and the reimagining of the nation.

#### 5.2.3.1. Long-Distance but Shallow Nationalism?

In discussing how Filipino migrants in Japan express and understand nationalism, Santiago explains that perhaps a better term that could better describe the experience of the Filipino community in Japan is "patriotism" or rather, how Filipinos understand patriotism as an expression of their underlying nationalism. If we are to explore how the Filipino communities in Japan express their nationalism through overt and open signs of patriotism, then most Filipinos in Japan are not patriotic. Citing the Filipino community in Tokyo, Santiago explains that although there are frequent Filipino cultural events organized in Tokyo by the Philippine embassy, mass media ventures such as ABS-CBN and other Filipino associations, they are mostly related to fostering a sense of nostalgia or idealized versions of the homeland.[89] He defines this as the

[89] Alto Broadcasting System-Chronicle Broadcasting Network (ABS-CBN) is the leading broadcast media channel in the Philippines. The recent decade has seen them heavily

"Endless Cycle of *Adobo* and *Tinikling*", wherein the Filipina spouses, who have already settled in Japan, bring their husband to enjoy the Filipino national food and watch the bamboo dance on stage.[90] While such events enjoy good participation rates, he believes that the majority of the Filipino communities in Tokyo still shy away from the Filipino community at large and even for those who attend such events, simple have a shallow sense of nationalism or patriotism.[91]

Santiago explains although the Filipino community in Japan, as represented by the majority of settled and married spouses, exhibit nationalism only through shallow representations and expressions of patriotism through cultural activities, there are some sub-groups that overtly express Filipino patriotism: namely that of the Japanese-Filipino Youths and the Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs). Indeed, Perez also explains that in his practical experience working and living in Japan, it is the Japanese-Filipino youths that are patriotic, in the sense that they use overtly patriotic symbols and iconography mixed with the burgeoning Filipino hip-hop scene in the Philippines and transplanting it in Japan.[92] Furthermore, Santiago explains that although these Japanese-Filipino youth express their Filipino patriotism by using such iconographies, they use it not so much because they truly love their homeland or have a nostalgic longing for them since they are still young or have been raised in Japan. Rather they exhibit a hip-hop "gangsta" culture to highlight, that similar to African-American hip-hop gangs, they too are marginalized and disenfranchised by the larger dominant or host society (Duaqui 2011a). Another group also worth mentioning is the case of the Filipino ALTs in Japan, who use their Filipino identity as a source of solidarity in face of the hardships they face as new English teachers in Japan.

#### 5.2.3.2. Criticizing the State and the *Bagong Bayani*

After discussing how migrants have a shallow sense of nationalism and patriotism that is mostly limited annual cultural gatherings, we now discuss how they view the

promote its successful Filipino cable channel, The Filipino Channel or TFC, to the Filipino diaspora in the US and also in Japan.

90 Interview with Santiago 2012.

91 This fear and concern of Filipinos to be “sized-up” and judged by their fellow countrymen is also discussed by Ong & Cabanes (2011) on their study exploring the dynamics and practice of Filipino scholars in UK universities.

92 Interview with Perez 2012.

state. When questions arise on how migrants view the state especially on its labor export policies and its *Bagong Bayani* discourse, their problems and frustrations with the embassy is the most raised issue. Although most migrants understand the value of their labor and how they contribute to their families back home and the homeland, they are critical on being labeled as "*Bagong Bayani*". In fact, they usually express this criticism whenever they feel frustrated over the rudeness and inefficiencies of the embassy staff in Tokyo. Although limited studies have been done on the performance of Philippine embassies abroad, anecdotal evidence shows that the embassy staff are often rude to the Filipino migrants, usually showing exasperated and condescending attitudes towards the Filipino migrants whenever they make small mistakes in their filing of forms, or even receiving small kickbacks whenever they collect dues and payments from the Filipinos. As such, Filipinos are critical of being labeled as *Bagong Bayani*, particularly stating that "How can we be called *Bagong Bayani* when this is how they treat us in our embassies?" In particular, Santiago mentions the inflexibility and callousness of the embassy staff during the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011 that affected the Filipino communities in Sendai and Fukushima. He cites the case of a Filipina woman who travelled all the way from Sendai to the Philippine embassy in Tokyo to request for a Philippine passport, after her home was devastated by the tsunami. She was asking for a passport so that she can go back home to the Philippines and recover from the trauma in her Sendai community, but the embassy staff turned her away since she lacked the documents. The women explained that she could not procure the needed documents because her local city hall and police station was inaccessible and devastated by the tsunami.[93]

Other than the frustrations directed towards the embassy staff and the limitations of migrant protection afforded by the state, another aspect that has resonance to the migrants relates to their attitudes towards the state of political affairs in the homeland. While most Filipino migrants in Japan has left the country for economic reasons, some of these migrants have seen their migrant voyage as a symptom of their feelings of helplessness towards the economic and political uncertainty on the homeland, which can be described as Filipino citizens deciding towards "flight rather than fight" (Quimpo 2008a). Indeed, even some Filipino migrants in Japan are interested in the state of

[93] Interview with Santiago 2012.

affairs in the homeland. This was explained by Go when she narrates how the Filipino community in Japan as a whole was quite optimistic and hopeful of the new Corazon Aquino administration when it took over the Marcos dictatorship in 1986. However their outlook quickly turned sour when one of the cornerstones of her administration - land reform was proven unsuccessful.[94] Chua explains that in an extreme case, one of her close migrant confidant suggested that the best way for the homeland to truly change is to shed blood and to start everything from scratch through a revolution.[95] These stories, although anecdotal nevertheless highlight the frustrations of the Filipino migrant community in Japan, and as such reflects their often cynical view on the Philippine state, and in particular on the *Bagong Bayani* discourse.[96]

#### 5.2.3.3. Pragmatic Migrant Outcomes and Notions of Patriotism

One of the main features of demotic nationalism is the pragmatic nature of how Filipino migrants react to their situations, which often goes beyond some of the older notions of Filipino patriotism. This pragmatism is highlighted by the notion of the *Panalo* and *Talo* (winner and loser) dichotomy. Introduced in the literature particularly by Ballescas (1992) in her studies of Filipina entertainers in Japan since the 1980's, one of the major themes of her study shows that a portion of the entertainers were quite aware of their situation before even coming to Japan. Also, in spite of their hardships and the gender issues of working in the entertainment industry entails, their primary consideration is not about being protected nor about helping the country through their remittances. Rather, their main goal is to maximize their migrant outcomes, while at the same time, minimizing the troubles and stresses that their migrant labor ensures. As such, their outlooks shows that more than their concerns about helping the nation or

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[94] The failure of the land reform initiative during the Corazon Aquino period was largely seen as a consequence of the return of the old oligarchic politics that controlled the newly restored Congress after the 1986 EDSA revolution. Other than the failure to control the interests of the landed-elites in the Congress, much of the criticism against Aquino was due to the fact that her own political clan in the province of Tarlac failed to abide by the laws of the land reform law (Abinales 2005: 235).

[95] Interview with Chua 2012.

[96] While the frustrations felt by Filipino migrants towards the rudeness and limitations of their embassy staff are common across the world, Japan presents a unique case. This is primarily related to the negative stereotypes and gender relations brought by the *Japayuki* narrative. As such, migrant Filipina women are often looked down upon by the embassy staff. In particular entertainers and spouses of Japanese nationals are often marginalized. For a more detailed discussion on this phenomenon, see Parrenas (2010).

about fighting for their migrant rights, above all, they are concerned about coming home successful, as a *panalo*, or a self-made migrant rather than a migrant who comes home empty-handed in spite of the sacrifices and the money they invested in their migrant journey.

This notion of *panalo* and *talo* is contradicts the old perceptions of patriotism, particularly as espoused by the state and alternative advocacy groups. In particular, one of these notions presupposes that permanent settling abroad is a shameful and cowardly act, especially since they not only turn their backs toward the home country, but above all fail to contribute to its development. This was best expressed when Sison, head of the national democracy movement, describes the betrayal of Filipinos who decide to become permanent residents in the US:

> He is either a doctor, a nurse or some other professional who prefers to stay in the United States as a permanent resident or who tries to become an American citizen. This type of fellow is a subtle betrayer of his country and, in the most extreme cases, a loud-mouthed vilifier of the Filipino people. He goes to the foreign land for higher pay and that is all he is interested in. He does not realize how much social investment has been put into his public schooling from the elementary level and up, and he refuses to serve the people whose taxes have paid for his education. We criticize him but we must as well condemn the government that allows him to desert and that fails to inspire him to work for the people (1967: 78).

While this used to be the dominant way of thinking about migration and patriotism, most migrants who have settled in Japan see nothing wrong with their decision to settle in their new host communities. This is best exemplified when Salvador, a long-time resident and one of the pioneering English teachers among Filipinos in Tsukuba explains that:

> "They say that I am not patriotic anymore since I tell prospective Filipino English teachers that they should speak, listen and think in English as much as possible. I don't see any problem with that. Although I speak English for my work career, as long as I still keep my mother tongue and do the best of my ability in order to uplift the character and image of the Filipino people, then I show my love for country".[97]

Indeed, he sees himself as a silent patriot since he helps his fellow Filipinos in learning the necessary skills to be good English teachers in Japan and at the same time, uplift the image and identity of the Filipino people in Japan.

[97] Interview with Salvador 2012.

#### 5.2.3.4. Transcending Victimhood and Agency of Migrants

Perhaps the strongest element of demotic nationalism is how it aims to highlight the agency of migrant workers and the Filipino diaspora. Although much literature has already focused on migrant agency (Suzuki 2003, 2000, Ball & Piper 2002), they have not focused on how migrants in particular view and practice the various nationalist discourses and often focus on migrant empowerment and protection rather than genuinely giving the migrants a chance to help themselves (Ofreneo & Samonte 2005:18). This issue of migrant agency and gender empowerment as it relates to the narratives of the *Japayuki* discourse is exemplified a specific incident that Chua experienced during her time working at the RCPC. She narrates how as part of the services offered by RCPC and their Japanese NGO counterparts; they were able to conduct interview sessions with trafficked women who were rescued from their work in the entertainment industry. She recounts that while their Japanese counterparts were concerned with the reasons on why they came to Japan (due to economic reasons) and were concerned that they were not aware of their future conditions as entertainers in Japan, the women were quite aware of their prospects and the challenges in their work at the entertainment industry in Japan. Although they face many challenges, according to the women, the tough part of their work was not the sexualized nature of their work, indeed they take everything in stride and simply do the best that they can.[98] Rather, they are critical of the quota system in their line of work, which makes their work tougher and also more difficult to earn money.[99] What Chua explains is that although the state and Japanese and Filipino advocacy groups all proclaim to care about the conditions of migrants and work for their empowerment, their views and assumptions regarding the true perspectives of migrants are often at odds. These themes will be explored further in the later sections of this chapter.

#### 5.2.3.5. Reimagining the Nation and Filipino Identity

One of the main arguments that this thesis posits is that the demotic dimension of diaspora nationalism allows for the migrants to reimagine the nation in ways that are

[98] Interview with Chua 2012.

[99] The quota system is quite common in entertainment establishments in Japan. The system requires an entertainer to reach a certain quota of points, which can be earned by asking their customers to buy drinks and food for them. If an entertainer couldn't reach her quota, then sanctions such as deductions of salary earnings will be implemented. For more details, see Ballescas (1992), San Jose (2004) and Faier (2009).

different from the forms promoted by the state and advocacy groups. Indeed, this is one of the most discernable features that are expressed by the Filipino migrant in Japan. In particular the reimagining of the nation as the Global Filipino nation will be discussed in more detail in the later sections of this chapter.

However, one of the main elements of the imagining of the nation relates to the basis of Filipino nationalism. While Anderson discussed the nation as an imagined community which sees the nation as having finite borders (2003), more and more, scholars are discussing the growing deterritorialized nature of nations that are not bound by national border. Basch etal discuss the concept of transnationalism towards migrants who are living in a trans nation between their host society (in the US) and their home communities (1994), while Nagata (2011), Tigno (2008) and Ohno (2008) also discusses the concept of deterritorialized nation among the long-term Filipino residents and Filipino nikkeijin communities in Japan. While these scholars already discuss the transnational features and deterritoriality of the Filipino nation, it is worth mentioning that the concept of the nation's territory also differs according to migrants.

On the question of the views of migrants on whether the Filipino nation can exist even in Japan, Santiago, Salvador and Chua offer views and perspectives. According to Santiago, he believes that long-term Filipino residents, especially those living in Japanese households already have been assimilated to the Japanese way of life (but not necessarily truly integrated and accepted in their societies and even households) and as such, already sees the Philippines as a distant nostalgic homeland far away. On the other hand, Chua opines that based on her work and through a gender perspective, that on the contrary to Santiago's position, it is exactly that although Filipina long-term residents have resident and settled in Japan, they are still marginalized and not fully integrated in their homes and Japanese host communities that the Philippines exists in their own households and Filipino networks. Salvador expresses another perspective of a long-term resident in Japan. He mentions that he sees the Philippines as simply the place where his hometown and parents live but he does not have much contact or feelings of nostalgia for the homeland since he already sees Japan as his second home, mainly since

his wife and daughter are with him in Tsukuba.[100] What is interesting in his views is that on closer analysis, his basis of the being Filipino is indeed not based on territory or deterritorialization of the nation as explained by both Santiago and Chua, but rather being Filipino is simply based on one's national identity and as such, he believes that he is being patriotic and being Filipino not by where he lives or resides but rather on helping Filipinos and uplifting their collective image in Japan. These themes will be further reflected again and discussed in the succeeding sections of this chapter.

In closing, while we have discussed the role and features of demotic nationalism, we should consider that the concept of demotic nationalism is better served as an analytical tool to explore the changes in the Filipino diaspora community in Japan and East Asia. The next sections will highlight the primacy of demotic nationalism, in particularly by showing how the Filipino diaspora community has exhibited this as they went to several phases throughout the years.

## 5.3. Primacy of Demotic Nationalism: Three Phases of the Filipino Community in Japan

### 5.3.1. Analytical Themes

In order to highlight the role of agency and primacy of demotic nationalism among the various groups of the Filipino diaspora in Japan, two analytical themes will be used in this section, namely that of Agency and the presence of various groups in Japan which can be thematically discussed as belonging to "three phases on redemption".

#### 5.3.1.1. Debate between Structure and Agency

One of the major themes discussed in social science research is the dichotomy between structure and agency. Even for migration studies, various studies have focused on the role of structure in migration protection through progressive migration policies, bilateral agreements on labor and the top-down approach adopted by the states to both promote (for labor sending countries) and control (for labor receiving countries) their migrants populations.

Among those who emphasize interventions based on the larger role of structure,

[100] Interview with Santiago 2012, Salvador 2012, Chua 2012.

Ball and Piper explore how the Philippine state finds itself trapped between its dependency on labor migration export and the widespread public anger over the exploitation and serious maltreatment of Filipino workers on the other. As such Ball and Piper argues that the state has adopted the language of human rights and concern for its citizens on a discursive level by enacting legislation aimed at deregulating state responsibility toward worker welfare, which ironically has the consequence of placing increasing responsibility onto the workers themselves, rather than making migrant worker welfare the responsibility of the state (2002). Using case studies of exploited undocumented male migrants and vulnerable female entertainers, the authors argue for a new approach to migrant worker protection based on innovative perspective on citizenship reflecting new transnational patterns of labor migration. In particular they point out to the "need for people to be involved in NGO activism across national borders taking up a new role as active citizens on behalf of their compatriots (as in the case of Filipino-run NGOs) or on behalf of non-nationals as part of a globalized workforce (as in the case of Japanese –run NGOs)" (2002:1031).

While Ball and Piper highlight the contribution of NGOs, Blank meanwhile emphasizes the impact of bilateral agreements in offering migration protection. Comparing the various bilateral agreements and memorandum of understanding between the Philippines and Japan, Canada, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and South Korea as case studies, Blank argues that promoting bilateral agreements is the best way to ensure the protection of Filipino overseas workers. Responding to the limitations of bilateral agreements, he asserts that "NGOs are correct in their assertion that non-binding bilateral labor agreements do not do enough to protect the welfare of workers, but considering the disinterest in nonbinding bilateral agreements by some states and the important need for better protection, surely nonbinding efforts to protect workers are better than no agreed-upon protection at all" (2011: 202). Furthermore he points out that in its pursuit to reach out towards non-cooperating states (such as Saudi Arabia who has refused to offer promises of protection under bilateral agreement with the Philippines), he suggests that "rather than framing bilateral labor agreements around workers protection, perhaps efficiency, cost/time savings, and general improvements to the labor relationship should be emphasized" (201).

With Blank focusing on the international dimension of worker protection through bilateral agreements, Tarumoto meanwhile highlight the role of Japanese migration policy creation. He particularly points out to the role of foreign outside pressure as the most crucial factor in developing citizenship policy of foreigners in Japan. Arguing that the "engine to improve immigrants' rights in Japan is not the challenges to growing ethno-cultural diversity within the society, but the challenges to international pressure from other countries" (2004: 220-221), he points out to the limits of multiculturalism in Japan:

> Multiculturalism has developed in an adhoc way as a strategy for integrating immigrant communities into a basically unchanged society. Similarly, Japanese citizenship policy for immigrants can be understood not as a conscious strategy but as a set of policies developed in an adhoc way. Contrary to the Australian case, however, Japanese policy has been, on purpose, not principally to integrate immigrants into Japanese society, but to govern and deal with international pressure from foreign countries (Tarumoto 2004: 223).

Whereas Tarumoto points out the adhoc nature of Japanese migration and citizenship policy creation, Akashi meanwhile highlights the heterogeneous nature of the Japanese society pertaining to migration policy. Pointing out the contending and changing views of various stakeholders, from the various government ministries, to the interest of various labor industries and the advocacy of civil society, Akashi argues that Japan is in the midst of transformation, which however can be characterized as being challenged but remaining for the most part unchanged (2010, 2009, 2006). As such, unlike Tarumoto's views on the primacy of foreign pressures, Akashi emphasizes on the role of the various facets of Japanese civil and political society and the specific role of the global economic crisis and political power shift in Japan in 2008.

Exploring the role of gender issues and migrant dynamics in Japan, Zulueta discusses how the Philippine pub has served as a "contact zone" which enabled the Japanese man to encounter the Filipina. While many scholars have already explored the dynamics and issues between entertainers and the Japanese man, Zulueta analyzes this phenomenon through a lens that revisits the enduring postcolonial relationship between Japan and the Philippines. Stating that the "Orientalizing gaze" of the Western male has been appropriated by the Japanese male in his encounter with the Filipina, articulating the desire for the exotic Other, which the Filipina embodies, she argues that "in order for the existing image of the Filipina in Japan (and elsewhere) to change, the

answer lies not in changing people's perceptions, but the transformation of existing structures that keep Third World woman in bondage to conditions of post-coloniality and patriarchy" (2004: 146-147).

After discussing the role of structure, this section will discuss the literature that focuses on agency, particularly on migrant agency and empowerment. Although migrant agency is defined and discussed in various studies, the term used by the migrant advocacy groups for migrant empowerment is "consciousness raising" which can be discerned through the following indicators: "1) Critical awareness to understand situations and problems; 2) Awareness of their rights as migrant workers; 3) Awareness of remedies to problems available through law or through services available in society; 4) Ability to exercise their rights and to articulate violations of those rights; and 5) Capability to exercise control over one's situation, to change one's situation, to restore dignity, to decide independently, to work collectively with others, to conceptualize, plan, and undertake alternative actions, to understand one's identity and to be able to access resources" (Ofreneo & Samonte 2005: 18).

Seemingly coinciding with their definition, various scholars also discuss the various facets of agency among the Filipino migrants in Japan. This includes the previous discussion on the changing patterns of marriage and settlement of the Filipino community in Japan, the expansion of citizenship recognition toward the JFCs and Filipino *Nikkeijin*, the impact of the opening of new migrant labor markets, particularly in the healthcare industry through the work of *Rainichi* and *Zainichi* caregivers and nurses; and lastly through the positive contributions of the Filipino migrants within their host communities in Japan, whether it be through the original hanayome brides in the rural areas, to the engagement with local NGOs in the highly urban areas of Nagoya and Tokyo and lastly with impact of the emergence of Filipino ALTs as conduits for multiculturalism from below. As highlighted in this chapter, while these various aspects and case study show various limitations and challenges, this chapter argues that in closer inspection, the agency of migrants and other multiple stake holders play a larger role than the impositions of structure.

While such studies discuss various aspects related to migrant agency especially

through gender perspectives, this research will show that we need to look further into the demotic nature of migrant agency by asking who defines migrant agency? Is the conceptualization of "agency" based on the definitions promoted by the state? For advocacy groups meanwhile, it would be interesting to explore whether their definition of "empowerment" really coincides with the interests and views of the migrants and not merely their ideological and institutional frameworks? Furthermore, it is important to really explore what "empowerment" and "agency" really mean for migrants themselves.

Indeed the concept of migrant agency is a truly disputed term even for migrant advocacy groups. Chua recounts how the concept of agency and empowerment espoused by the state (Philippine and Japanese) and advocacy groups (especially her Japanese counterparts on gender) focused on their own conceptions and presumptions. In particular, she mentions how Japanese gender groups focus on the victimization of the trafficked women, blame the poverty in the Philippines as the main push factor in their victimhood, and lastly focus on bringing these poor women "deported" or repatriated back to the Philippines. While their views does have precedents, it nevertheless perpetuates the Japayuki discourse and the problems it entails - such as discrimination and marginalization of entertainers in Japan and the problems of integration for those who marry to Japanese households. As such, she sees that her previous work at the RCPC as providing service to migrant women through counseling important but nevertheless lacking in bringing true empowerment to the women. During the course of our interview, she mentions how she tries to truly empower women by listening to their problems, but at the same time provide them the tools and means to help their problems on their own.[101]

[101] Interview with Chua 2012.

**Table 5.3. Changes in the Number of Alien Registration of Philippine Nationals by Selected Status of Residence (2007-2011)**

| Status of Residence | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Entertainer | 50,691 | 23,643 | 14,149 | 11,065 | 9,199 | 7,465 | 6,319 | 4,188 |
| Spouse or Child of Japanese National | 43,817 | 45,148 | 49,195 | 51,076 | 49,980 | 46,027 | 41,255 | 38,249 |
| Permanent Resident | 47,407 | 53,430 | 60,225 | 67,131 | 75,806 | 84,407 | 92,754 | 99,604 |
| Long-Term Resident (*Nikkeijin*) | 23,756 | 26,811 | 29,907 | 33,332 | 35,717 | 37,131 | 37,870 | 39,331 |
| Trainee | 2,888 | 2,906 | 3,738 | 4,919 | 4,938 | 3,970 | 730 | 308 |
| Specialist in Humanities/ International Services | 558 | 666 | 757 | 825 | 895 | 951 | 940 | 920 |
| Temporary Visitor | 13,267 | 14,527 | 12,732 | 10,856 | 8,698 | 6,705 | 5,326 | 4,290 |
| **Total** | **199,394** | **187,261** | **193,488** | **202,592** | **210,617** | **211,716** | **210,181** | **209,376** |

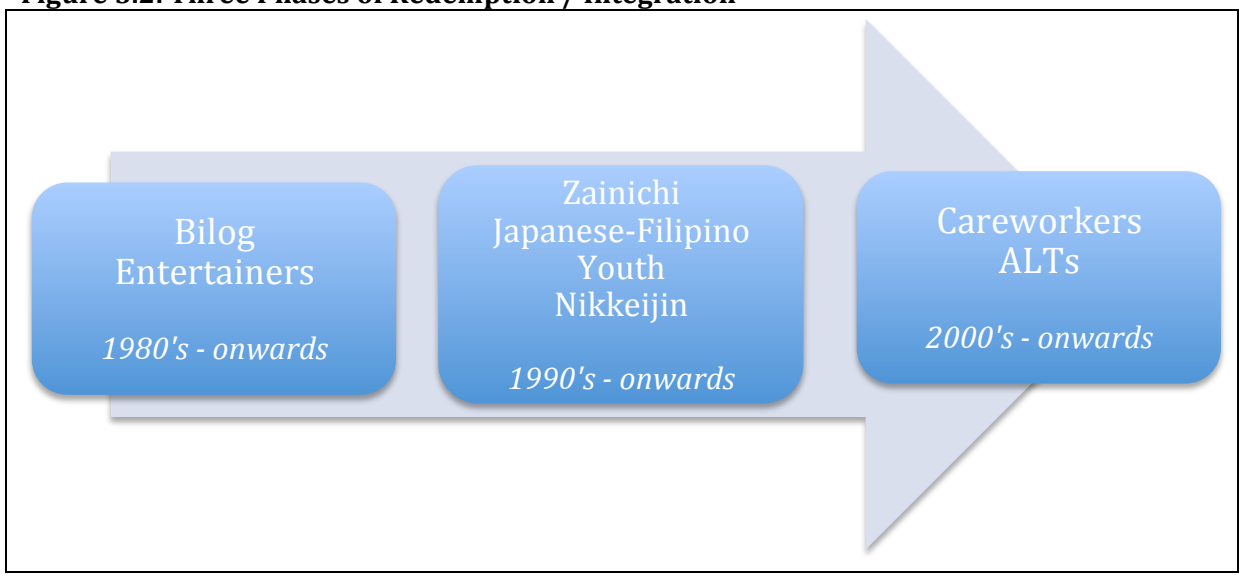
Source: Compiled statistics from the Immigration Control 2009 & 2012 Report (MOJ 2012, 2009b).

### 5.3.2. Three Phases of Redemption/Integration

While most of the literature discuss the presence of various phases and the continually changing character of the Filipino community in Japan, this research will go beyond the manner by which previous literature have discussed the changes faced by the Filipino diaspora through a temporal gradation of time periods and specific waves of migrant labor groups. Rather than doing so, this section will show that the changes experienced by the Filipino diaspora community in Japan also coincide by their desire for social mobility and genuine integration to Japanese society. In particular, this section will show that it reflects how specific migrant groups react and attempt to reinvent themselves in order to be more integrated to the larger Japanese society. As such, this section defines the changes experienced by the larger Filipino diaspora in Japan as experiencing three distinct phases that reflects their goals for redemption (as it transcends the *Japayuki* discourse) and integration in the larger Japanese society.[102]

[102] This chapter discusses how the Filipino diaspora community in Japan has gone through three phases of redemption vis-à-vis their aims to be better integrated to Japanese society. While

**Figure 5.2. Three Phases of Redemption / Integration**




Source: Diagram prepared by the author.

### 5.3.2.1. Phase 1 - *Bilog* and Entertainers (1980's - onwards)

#### A. *Bilog* in an Underground Society

Although there had already been pioneering Filipino migrants who came to Japan during the late 19th century and early 20th century, such as Filipino nationalist exiles and the original "entertainers" who were jazz musicians, vaudeville actors and boxers (Mojares 2011, Suzuki and Takahata 2007, Yu-Jose 2007), the first real wave of labor migrants from the Philippines came to Japan during the 1980's as entertainers and undocumented laborers who were employed in construction and other service sectors.

The male Filipino migrant were often undocumented workers who came to Japan through different visa statuses and decided to remain to work at the booming construction industry and other 3K jobs that the local Japanese were shunning away from. While various studies have focused on their plight (Komai 2001, Ballescas 1992, David 1991), none is quite articulated well than Rey Ventura's *Underground in Japan* (2006), a biographical account on his life as an undocumented worker and day worker at Kotobuki, Yokohama. Reflecting on his decision to be an undocumented worker or

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these phases are being discussed, it should be noted that although it coincides with the general demographic and visa status trends throughout the years, these phases are not necessarily linear or limited to a certain time frame. Rather these phases are used as ideal-types to highlight the thematic changes in perceptions and aspirations of the Filipino diaspora community in Japan.

"*Bilog*", Ventura contrasts his life from that of being a student journalist and activist who was part of the "underground" movement against Marcos in the Philippines and then eventually becoming an "underground" worker in Japan after his student visa had expired from his studies in a Japanese language school.

While his accounts, shared in almost ethnographical detail, highlighted the everyday life and problems faced by both the Japanese day worker (*tachinbo*) and the *bilog* undocumented worker; his narrative nevertheless touches on some of the key issues related to migrant agency. Indeed, one of the biggest fears of a "bilog" is when they get arrested, detained and deported. In order to face their vulnerability, they have devised many means to cope, such as support groups, help from various NGOs and churches and small mannerisms in order to hide their identities and status from local policemen and immigration officers. In particular, Ventura mentions their use of professional SLR cameras in order to pretend as foreign tourists in order to move more freely in various parts of Yokohama (2006).

By the end of the book, Ventura decides to surrender himself to the local police so that he can voluntarily go through deportation procedures without the fear of unplanned arrest and detention. While the *bilogs* have always feared this final confrontation, Ventura explains that the "voluntary deportation" process was straightforward. During his consultation with the police, he was asked where he lived and his usual work areas. The policeman then proceeded to check his local map and was able to explain in detail the usual work hangouts, residence and work patterns of him and his fellow *bilogs*. Ventura explains that he was quite shocked on the level of knowledge of the authorities on their movements and commented how all the while he thought they had agency with their encounters with the law. However his experience of voluntary surrender showed how the police all along know how they operate and were merely allowing them to continue with their lives since it was beneficial for all parties involved that the system of cheap yet undocumented foreign labor continues other than the occasional token crack-downs against them. Ventura explains:

> I was shocked. Even though I had always suspected that we lived in Koto on sufferance, I hadn't fully appreciated that when we thought we were hiding we were doing no such thing…. We lived in hiding. They pretended not to see us. When public opinion demanded, they made a token raid. For the rest of the time, we were a necessary evil. We thought we were so clever. We thought we knew the ropes.

Whom do we think we were kidding? (2006:144-145).

Although much literature has already discussed the vulnerability and issues faced by the various migrant groups in Japan throughout the years, it commonly describes the situation of undocumented workers as the most vulnerable among the Filipino diaspora groups in Japan. David articulated this when he described the Filipinos community in Japan during the 1980's as being vulnerable "as long as they operate without the proper work permit, and for as long as Japan continues 'to need the labor but not the laborer' " (1991: 23).

Perez agrees with David by explaining that unlike entertainers and other Filipino migrant workers in Japan, *bilogs* are most vulnerable due to their legal status and difficulty in accessing help and support.[103] Indeed, the problems faced by undocumented workers were exacerbated when the Japanese government followed a policy since the early 2000s that led to a massive crackdown on undocumented labor in Japan, leading to the numbers of Filipino *bilogs* to rapidly decrease. During interviews with NGO and various social workers on Filipino migrant labor in Japan, anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that the immigration and police were so aggressive that traditional places of refuge, such as churches and train stations, were closely monitored by authorities to arrest Filipinos on their way to and away from home for Sunday church services. Indeed, although the Japanese authorities also included various reforms in their immigration policies to include provisions for special work permissions and extended periods of stay for arrested undocumented workers for humanitarian or family unification grounds, flaws in the system still exists.[104]

[103] Interview with Perez 2012.

[104] One case in point is the much publicized case of Noriko Calderon, a Filipina child whose parents were both Filipino undocumented workers who was born and raised in Japan in spite of their family's legal status. When her parents were arrested and detained for deportation procedures, Noriko and various advocacy groups in Japan campaigned for Noriko to be allowed to stay in Japan since she was in all accounts already "Japanese". Both the Japanese and Filipino media followed the story closely, culminating with Noriko's parents asking for leniency in so that they can remain as a family in Japan. With an impassioned pleading in Nihongo by Noriko's parents, the campaign led them to receive a temporary reprieve and they were able to stay in Japan a little while longer. While Noriko's parents were eventually deported back to the Philippines, she was allowed to stay in Japan under the guidance of her Filipino uncle who was a legal resident in Japan (McNeill 2009a, 2009b).

**Table 5.4. Changes in Number of Over stayers / Undocumented Filipinos in Japan (1991-2012)**

| Year | Estimate | Year | Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1991 | 27,228 | 2002 | 29,649 |
| 1992 | 31,974 | 2003 | 30,100 |
| 1993 | 35,392 | 2004 | 31,428 |
| 1994 | 37,544 | 2005 | 30,619 |
| 1995 | 39,763 | 2006 | 30,777 |
| 1996 | 41,997 | 2007 | 28,491 |
| 1997 | 42,547 | 2008 | 24,741 |
| 1998 | 42,608 | 2009 | 17,287 |
| 1999 | 40,420 | 2010 | 12,842 |
| 2000 | 36,379 | 2011 | 9,329 |
| 2001 | 31,666 | 2012 | 6,908 |

Source: Immigration Control 2012 Report (MOJ 2012: 40).

Although both media accounts and the literature suggest the vulnerability of undocumented migrants, the demotic dimension of their stay in Japan also can be discerned. Jimenez, in contrast to the usual arguments of the literature on undocumented workers argue that in spite of their vulnerability, Filipino *bilogs* are in fact more sheltered and helped by various Filipino community organizations, churches and Japanese civil society groups compared to other Filipino documented workers exactly because of their legal vulnerabilities (2011).

Another point that can be discerned is the pragmatic thinking and outlook employed by the Filipino bilog, that contrary to accepted notions by the literature, are quite aware of their situations and vulnerability, they already accept their situations in a fatalistic manner, reflecting the *panalo* and *talo* thematic dichotomy. This was reflected in Ventura's follow-up work entitled *Into the Country of Standing Men* (2007). The book is a compilation of essays and accounts of his return to Japan when he married his Japanese wife raised their own family in Yokohama while he worked as a freelance journalist in Japan. While *Underground* recounts his experience as an undocumented worker, *Into the Country* meanwhile discusses how he tries to adjust to Japanese social life and reflects the concerns faced by long-term Filipino residents in Japan as they try to be integrated but ultimately still separated from larger Japanese society.

Other than stories of his experiences with raising his daughter and the uneasy

dynamics he had with his in-laws, Ventura in the process of making a documentary "*Dekasegi*" revisits the old neighborhood in Kotobuki. During this period, he eventually meets up with both his Japanese acquaintances of day laborers and old Filipino friends who were also *bilogs* like him. He recounts how his friend Dante eventually came home to the Philippines and through his hard-earned remittance, was able to send his daughter to a good university. His daughter, who eventually migrated to the US as a nurse, led to his final journey as a Filipino reaching the ultimate diaspora "dream" of pursuing a new life in the US. On the other hand, he also followed another comrade named Gabriel who after twenty years was unfortunately still a day laborer and undocumented worker. Even as he is aging and not in the best of health, Gabriel is still trying hard to work and leads him to live in a "blue mansion", or a squatter housing with blue plastic sheets as roofing under a bridge in Yokohama (2007). The difference between the outcomes of the migrant journey between Dante and Gabriel reflects the fatalism that pervades the outlook that the Filipino diaspora faces.

Similar to the theme mentioned by Ventura, Aguilar mentions that the Filipino diaspora is well aware of their uneasy and difficult situations and yet still continues with their migrant journey, which he likens as a pilgrimage, reflecting the ocean-faring past of the pre-colonial and colonial Filipinos (2002). Furthermore, the precedence of seeking pragmatic decisions in order to have a successful migrant outcome trumps all notions of coming home to help the country nor working to change the political system as espoused by official and alternative nationalist thinking. Indeed, the shame and need to come home as a "*panalo*" and not a "*talo*" has led Gabriel to still work in his depressingly and dismal life in his blue mansion in spite of the number of years he had worked in Japan (Ventura 2007).

**B. Entertainers: Addressing the *Japayuki* Discourse**

In discussing the plight of entertainers in Japan, much has been discussed regarding their victimhood and vulnerability. From the Japanese media, it was Tetsuo Yamatani, a Japanese freelance writer and film maker who popularized the term Japayuki when he introduced the concept in his documentary film *Japayukisan: Tonan Ajia kara no dekasegi shofutachi* (*Japayukisan*: Migrant Prostitutes from Southeast Asia). While his work was factually accurate, many criticized his work in that the tone of his

writing was condescending to the migrant women. Faier expresses this criticism well when she explains that in the context of Japan's bubble economy, Yamatani used the metaphor of the *Japayuki* as a metaphor on how Japan has progressed far from its Asian neighbors, when decades ago, it were Japanese women, also known as *Karayuki*, who had to travel to various Asian countries as sex workers due to the hardships of Japan. Now that Japan is industrialized, it is the Southeast Asia women who now go to Japan as manifestation of their backwardness (Faier 2009).

After discussing the issues related to their victimhood and vulnerability, as expressed in Yamanaka when she states that "journalistic documentaries tend to be sensational appeals to curiosity and prompt both sympathy and revulsion toward these Asian women. The public perceives *Japayuki*-san less as persons and more as sex objects, and associates them with their male clients and underworld exploiters"(1993: 82-83). There have also been studies that focus on the agency of entertainers in Japan. In her pioneering work on Filipino entertainers in Japan, Ballescas (1992) discusses the problem faced by the women but also show that they too have agency and have many ways in order to cope up with their situation. Other studies meanwhile explore the limitations of Philippine state policies to address the issues of trafficking and abuse faced by the entertainers (San Jose 2004, Suzuki 2002, Ball and Piper 2002), and yet in spite of these limitations, they were still able to express their agency in their daily work and living both in Japan and in the Philippines.

Although many scholars have already discussed the various dimensions of migrant agency with a particular focus on Filipina entertainers in Japan, this chapter addresses the literature gap in that most studies have not focus on how specifically they view nationalisms in the face of the state and various advocacy groups' promotion of their version of nationalism rhetoric and perspectives. Using the framework diaspora nationalisms, this section highlights the demotic dimension of the migrants views that give precedence and primacy to pragmatism and negotiated views related to the homeland, rather than the prescriptive and normative debates promoted by the state and advocacy groups.

In discussing the agency of migrant women during her years as a gender and

migrant rights activist in Japan, Chua explains that for most migrants, they were concerned with their everyday concerns rather than the larger issues imposed and discussed to them by the state and advocacy groups as represented by the contending interpretations of the *Bagong Bayani* discourse. This was reflected in her story of the entertainers that the RCPC and their Japanese gender NGOs "rescued". During their interviews on their plight and concerns, most of the women were quite aware of their situations and had ways to cope up in spite of the trials that they face. This goes in the face of the perceptions and assumptions of well to do Japanese NGOs that often perpetuate the underlying assumptions of the Japayuki discourse. Go explains that the women were more concerned about the quota system prevalent among entertainment bars or *omise* rather than the whole macro-situation of Filipina's working or being trafficked to Japan.[105] Although such evidence maybe anecdotal and may not be representative of the whole entertainer scenario in Japan during the 1990's, it nevertheless shows that for some women, they exhibit agency through their very pragmatic views that reflect the fatalistic and instrumentalist view of the *panalo-talo* dichotomy, rather than the larger gender or migrant labor issues being worked on by Japanese and Filipino advocacy groups and official agencies of both the Japanese and Philippine government.

Another aspect that reflects the agency of entertainers as reflecting the primacy of demotic nationalism relates to how they attempt to integrate to Japanese society and somehow search for "redemption" through various means - from trying to fit-in with their Japanese families and communities, to considering new work possibilities that they view as having a redemptive dimension since they can more accepted in Japan, and at the same time, use their perceived "innate" characteristics of being Filipino.

The concept and aims toward "redemption" by the entertainers are also reflected by the spate of recent literature discussing how former entertainers have attempted to move on outside of the entertainment industry. One such literature is Suzuki's study on how former entertainers, spouses and hanayome mail order attempt to be accepted in their communities through philanthropic endeavors, such as fund-raising activities and diaspora philanthropy projects to various disaster torn areas in the Philippines. Other

[105] Interview with Chua 2012.

than helping their homeland in times of need, their activities reflect their religious and catholic mind set, and through such activities, they were attempting to go beyond the negative stereotypes and perceptions associated with the Japayuki discourse in their adopted Japanese communities.

Suzuki mentions how Filipino settled migrants and rural brides have transcended the discourse of victimized *Japayuki* by being active in church activities, entrepreneurial activities and philanthropic projects (2003, 2000). In particular, Suzuki cites the case of the Japan Society of Filipina Wives (JSFW), a community-based Filipino organization started in the early 1990s, which attempted to overcome negative, and sensationalist images of victimized or immoral women. Comprising of married Filipinas, they organized various transnational projects as signs of accommodation and resistance to the ideological gender constructions of the "bad girl" Filipinas disseminated in urban Japan and beyond (2000: 436). These included Christian charity programs for the less fortunate in the Philippines, and their annual charity Christmas party entitled *Pamaskong Handog* (literally Christmas gift) which includes various cultural presentations, Filipino food and music and its finale which "highlights the message of JSFW women's identities as wives and mothers, as all the women line up on stage with their husbands and children. By standing side by side, the women attempt to project themselves as wives and mothers in Japan who are leading happy marital and family lives" (2000: 438). Suzuki explains that just as their public events in Japan are used to counter negative "entertainer" stereotypes, charitable activities in the Philippines have allowed its members to challenge their defiled images at home as well. This includes using the money raised during the *Pamasko* event to assist three groups of people, including squatter dwellers, patients in an under equipped hospital, and school children.

Similar studies include the research done by Dugtong-Yap (2010) and Duaqui (2011) that focus on the diaspora philanthropic activities of the Filipino communities in Japan. While they discusses the developmental aspect of their endeavors towards the Philippines, one of the key themes presented by their research is the redemptive quality that such philanthropic activities have on the migrants themselves.

Even as the number and flow of Filipina entertainers coming to Japan decreased in the 2000s which played a role in the changing character of the Filipino diaspora community in Japan, Parrenas also discusses how entertainers have also exhibited agency by doing various activities and customs in order to prevent "building roots" in their current place of employment. Parrenas explains that since entertainers have always been contractual in their employment and that since they always were assigned to different establishments and work areas for their every contract, they often decide not to invest too much in building ties to their current area of work. Furthermore, Parrenas explains that since they face marginalization with the larger Filipino diaspora community in Japan, they also show their agency by distancing themselves with the other segments of the Filipino diaspora in Japan, even to those former entertainers who have married and settled in Japan. Parrenas cites the case of an Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) welfare officer based in the Philippine embassy in Tokyo, who prioritizes members of the community other than entertainers (for example wives and domestic workers) to 'uplift the image of the Filipino community' (2010).[106] She explains that:

> In its quest to improve the public image of Filipinos, OWWA sees it as a priority to inform the public that not all Filipinos in Japan are entertainers, which we could speculate to mean that not all Filipinos are sexually loose women. The dismissal of entertainers as a public embarrassment for the identity of the nation indicates not only the marginal status of entertainers in the community, but more importantly it tells us that OWWA, at least under the leadership of the welfare officer during my field research, had not addressed the needs of one of its largest constituents in Tokyo (2010: 316).

This shows that in practice, the state often marginalizes and fails to reach out to their constituents and often prioritizes improving the 'image of the Filipino overseas community'.

After discussing the various facets and means in exhibiting agency by entertainers, one way they do so is through their decision to marry and settle in Japan, whether due to personal and affectionate reasons such as love and companionship or convenience.

[106] As explained in the previous chapters, the OWWA is the designated government agency assigned to protect and promote the welfare and wellbeing of Filipino migrants and their dependents, with its operating budget not coming form the Philippine government but from the annual subscription collected from OFWs deployed by the government.

With the changing trends and the entertainer ban implemented since the 2000s, the number of entertainers has decreased rapidly, while the number of spouses and permanent residents has increased gradually since the 1980's. As they age and began to settle in Japan, these former entertainers and mail-order hanayome brides have began to build families and also attempt to integrate with their Japanese host communities, all the while attempting to address their past experiences and also the stigma as brought upon by the *Japayuki* discourse. These issues will be further discussed in the next section as we label these former entertainers as *Zainichi*.

#### 5.3.2.2. Phase 2 - *Zainichi*, Japanese Filipino Youth and Nikkeijin (1990's - onwards)

As explained earlier, the second phase not merely represents the second phase or period of the changing character of the Filipino diaspora in Japan, but it also represents another phase that aspires for better integration and acceptance in the larger Japanese society. Although the wave of entertainers in Japan did not stop until it peaked in the early 2004, the 1990's experienced a demographic shift among the visa statuses of Filipinos in Japan. When before the largest group were those entering as entertainers, gradually the number of spouses, permanent residents and children of international marriages between Filipinos and Japanese have also increased. These trends plus the entry of the Filipino *Nikkeijin* will be discussed in the succeeding section by highlighting how these particular groups manifested their agency and also the primacy of demotic nationalism.

**A. Filipino *Zainichi***

The term *Zainichi*, which literally means "long-term resident", used to refer to the ethnic Chinese and Korean migrants who migrated to Japan as colonial subjects under the imperial government. After the Second World War, these migrant workers shifted from being Japanese "nationals" into foreigners. During the 1970's, these *Zainichi* groups came to the forefront of campaigning and fighting for foreign migrant and *Zainichi* rights. Although the term used to exclusively refer to these ethnic Chinese and Koreans, the recent academic literature have began to refer to Filipino spouses and permanent-term residents as Zainichi.

In her study exploring the impact of the movement of natural persons provision of the 2006 Japan-Philippine Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA), which includes an agreement to gradually send nurses and caregivers to Japan, Ballescas (2007) distinguishes between two Filipino groups who can be affected by the agreement. She refers to the healthcare workers coming from the Philippines as *Rainichi* (literally, those who come to Japan) while those spouses and permanent residents who are vying for work as caregivers as *Zainichi*.

While the term *Zainichi* is already becoming an accepted term in academic and journalistic circles in the 2000s, it was not the first time it was used to refer to Filipino women in Japan. Chua, in her work as a gender and migrant advocate since the early 1990's explains that she and several migrant women have decided to use the term Zainichi to refer to spouses and permanent residents. In particular, she created the *Zainichi Firipin Josei Network* in 1996 as a support group for migrant women. Their activities include several group meetings and discussions, workshops and even a newsletter "name" in order to create a genuine community from the bottom-up. She explains that while the group was organized to empower women and to give agency in their lives in Japan, the approach they followed was not a "hold my hand" approach, but rather one that wills its members to be independent and self-reliant. Go says that during her work at the RCPC and *Zainichi Firipin Josei Network*, she had always given the women the tools for their empowerment and help, but it was only up to the women themselves to act and be strong.[107]

Among its many activities, the *Zainichi Firipin Josei Network* had several members from different parts of Japan, with a certain Ms. E, being one of its most active members. She explains that Ms. E was a full-time mother and housewife but was one of the most engaged members who was responsible for running and editing their group newsletter entitled "*Pinay Ito*" (This is the Filipina). Some of their milestone includes having two annual meetings wherein they were able articulate their concerns and growing pains as a support group. While the group had a good start, it unfortunately ran out of steam due to funding issues and also the availability of its members since they had a hard time balancing their work for their network and their responsibilities in their households.

[107] Interview with Chua 2012.

During the course of our interview, I mentioned that the term *Zainichi* has gradually been accepted. In this she was pleasantly surprised and saw it as a positive sign that the views regarding Filipino women in Japan had been gradually changing throughout the years.[108] These themes were further explored in a book she co-authored with Yeong-Hae entitled *The Self as a Journey: Beyond Gender and Racism* (1999).

Another theme that discusses how former entertainers, spouses and mail-order *hanayome* brides exhibit their agency is on how they assimilate and attempt to be integrated to their home communities, especially in the countryside wherein traditional Japanese values and the Japanese *ie* system prevails. One of the biggest issues that Japan faced since the 1980's which coincides with its economic development is the so-called "bride shortage" (*yome busoku*) (Faier 2009). This refers to how Japanese women have began to reject the traditional *ie* system in the countryside, in which Japanese wives experienced big expectations to conform with their in-laws while at the same time suffer from low social status within the family. This has led Japanese women to not only marry later in life, but also above all migrate to the urban centers and prefer not to marry rural husbands, especially the first-born. This phenomenon had led to rural communities suffering from demographic and economic stagnation, leading some communities to actively seek out potential spouses from other countries. Known as foreign hanayome brides, these "mail-order brides" came from Southeast Asia or China, with a large group being also former entertainers who have decided to settle down in their adopted communities of their Japanese husbands.

Such themes were explored by Faier, an anthropologist who produced an excellent book entitled *Intimate Encounters: Filipina Women and the Remaking of Rural Japan* (2009). An ethnographic research on a small village in Nagano prefecture, it discusses how former entertainers and *hanayome* brides' attempts to integrate into their adopted communities. One of the main themes highlighted by her research was how the Japanese community praised a close friend of the author in her efforts to become a hardworking (and subservient) wife. Faier mentions: "On a number of occasions, I heard them and other community members describe Cora as an *ii oyomesan*, an ideal, traditional Japanese bride and daughter-in-law, and as more 'typically Japanese

[108] Interview with Chua 2012.

[*nihonjinrashii*] than young Japanese women today' "(2009: 3). Even as Faier argues that Filipina spouses in rural communities have made some headway into the Japanese family society, Chua is quite critical on the view expressed by the Japanese in-laws and members of the adopted communities regarding the Filipina women.

While Faier shows that Filipina spouses and former entertainers have made some headway into their adopted communities, since they were "more Japanese than the Japanese women", Chua argues that to the contrary this remark only shows how the Japanese expect from the foreign women to adopt to their own culture and mores while still treating them as separate rather than genuinely accepting these foreign brides as their own. She explains that this reflects the "colonial-racist mentality" that the host societies have towards their migrants, much in the same way US treats towards the Filipino diaspora in their country.[109]

While Faier and Chua discusses the dynamics of Filipina women in the rural setting, Santiago explains during an interview that Filipina spouses who are in a Japanese household (excluding the single mothers to which the CJFF is the main beneficiary) are the most assimilated among the Filipino diaspora, as such they rarely exhibit outward signs of patriotism nor practice long-distance nationalism by maintaining ties to the homeland.[110]

Although these stories may seem contradicting, it nevertheless highlights the heterogeneity of the Filipino community in Japan. As such, when the demotic dimension regarding the *Zainichi* is discussed, it is only natural that the "negotiated" aspect of their interactions can be understood.

**B. Japanese Filipino Youth and the JFC**

As discussed earlier, Santiago describes the Japanese-Filipino Youth as an aggregate of ideal-types which differentiates among the following:

i. Japanese-Filipino Children (JFC) - while it denotes to children of with both Japanese and Filipino parents, it refers to children who were often born out of wedlock

[109] Interview with Chua 2012.
[110] Interview with Santiago 2012.

and as such often seek recognition from their Japanese parents. Also known as *Japino*, portmanteau for Japanese and Filipino, JFC are unofficially estimated to be around 200,000 (ABS-CBN News 2009, PDI 2009).[111] Some scholars and writers have also referred to them as *Shin-Nikkeijin*, both to emphasize their Japanese roots.

ii. Filipino - Japanese Children (FJC) - while the JFC denotes children raised in the Philippines, born out of wedlock and seeking recognition, FJC meanwhile refer to children who are born and raised in Japan within a typical nuclear family with both a Japanese and Filipino parents. Since these children are raised in Japan, they often have a Japanese identity and can be considered as second generation Filipino - Japanese (much in the same way that you may have second and third generation Filipino-Americans or Filipino-Canadians).

iii. Adopted Filipinos - one category that is under-researched is the presence of Filipino youth who are adopted by a Japanese parent. These Filipino youths as Filipino children who are adopted by their Japanese foster fathers and have come to live and work in Japan together with their Filipina mothers. As one of the main beneficiaries of the CJFF, Santiago explains that they are one of the most vulnerable among the youths since although they may have nominal citizenship as Japanese; they haven't been integrated to Japanese society and often work in 3K jobs.[112] Other studies that explore this theme include the work of Takahata (2011b, 2011c).

In discussing the actions to promote agency and empowerment of Japanese-Filipino youth, most of the advocacy groups concentrate on the how the JFC in particular seek recognition of their citizenship from their Japanese parents and also a chance to visit to learn of their roots. While there are provisions for the children of Japanese nationals to be recognized as Japanese, it has to go through a special process called “legitimization” for children born out of wedlock. This process is described as:

> Legitimization applies to cases where a child, whose father is Japanese and mother is non-Japanese, is borne out of wedlock. In this case, the child acquires Japanese nationality (the father’s nationality) as long as the father has acknowledges the fact that he is the biological father *before* the child is born. However, if the father acknowledges that he is the biological father *after* the child is born, the child cannot obtain the father nationality, in spite of the fact the Japanese Civil Law recognizes that the child can be legitimized once the child is recognized by his or her father

[111] The term *Japino* is not often used by the JFC and NGOs since it often elicits a negative image, since it phonetically resembles the loaded term of *Japayuki* (San Jose 2004).

[112] Interview with Santiago 2012.

> after the child is born and the father is obliged to support the child financially (Selleck 2001: 190).

Since these children have been born out of wedlock and are not recognized by their biological fathers before their births, they cannot acquire Japanese nationality and take on their mother's nationality automatically.

To address the needs of the JFC, several Japan and Philippine-based NGOs have been created to deliver important services to these children. This includes programs to provide financial support to their mothers, and to also identify in a discrete manner the fathers of the JFC, in order to persuade them to recognize their children and provide for financial assistance.[113] Throughout the years, various NGOs such as *Batis Aware*, Development Action for Women Network (DAWN) and the JFC network have worked for the plight of these children, and as these children grew up into their formative teenage years, they have created several programs specifically for these youths. This includes DAWN's *Teatro Akebono*, in which the JFC are given a chance to travel to Japan to advocate for their recognition through performing theatrical plays highlighting the plight of the JFCs in various community centers and schools throughout Japan; and the creation of the *Batis*-YOGHI (Youth Organization Gives Hope and Inspiration), a JFC youth organization for their mutual support and socialization (Batis Center 2009).

Although various NGOs and advocacy groups have lobbied for the recognition of these JFC, it was only in 2008 that the Japanese Supreme Court made a decision in June 4, 2008 to allow 10 JFCs plaintiffs to claim their legal rights to a Japanese nationality in spite of their status. Indeed various media outlets have called the verdict "epoch-making" because the court declared a provision in the Nationality Law as unconstitutional. As explained in the previous discussion on the legitimization process, the Nationality Law states that a JFC can only be granted Japanese nationality if the father acknowledges paternity before the child's birth. Brasor explains that:

> The Supreme Court ruled that this provision violates Article 14 of the Constitution, which guarantees equality under the law, since the Nationality Law also states that

[113] The role of the NGOs acting as the go-between is important since some of these Japanese fathers already have families of their own. Their role is important to prevent accusations of blackmailing, and cases of harassment between the fathers, the children and their Filipina mothers (San Jose 2004).

> an out-of-wedlock child who is acknowledged by the father after birth can be granted Japanese nationality if the father and the mother subsequently marry. That means the only difference with regard to granting nationality is the married status of the parents. Such a condition constitutes unequal treatment (Brasor 2008).

He goes on further by explaining that with this ruling, a predicted 100,000 new Japanese can be recognized. Through such provisions of recognition, the embassy of Japan in the Philippines has already enacted several procedures for the formal recognition of these JFC (EJP 2009).[114]

Although recognizing the positive developments brought by their recognition, Suzuki discusses the challenges faced by several JFC in Japan, of whom some live with their Filipino mothers:

> Kei, like many other JFC, wishes to study in college and achieve his dream of becoming a businessman. At the same time, some of them are aware that they do not have the economic, social and cultural capital to realize their dreams. As youths, although they have acquired adequate conversation skills, their knowledge of Japanese characters and vocabulary is unbalanced since they missed elementary education in Japan… The majority are, in fact, striving to make ends meet. Many JFCs like Kei have taken low-level jobs and some began working as hostesses and "hosts" (male companions primarily for female customers) at nightclubs – the kind of job their mothers did in the past and/or continue to do. Having spent their formative years in the Philippines, JFC with few resources to create stability in their lives, not to mention socioeconomic mobility, are finding life difficult even if they are now legally Japanese (2010: 48).

While these activities and campaigns talk about bringing agency to these youths and empowering them in their activities for recognition, an important perspective to consider is the demotic dimension on how these youths try to discern and understand their national identity and how they specifically portray and express their nationalism.

During a discussion on which Filipino group in Japan exhibits patriotic feelings, Santiago explains that it is the adopted Filipino youths who are most explicit in their Filipinoness. Perez then explains that these youth are really into the Filipino hip-hop

[114] Although this is seen as a largely positive development for JFC recognition, some sectors have already recognized the potential for these JFC as new sources migrant labor. Since the JFC were borne and raised in the Philippines and their chances for reintegration quite limited, anecdotal evidence have shown that a growing number of these JFC are being employed mostly in the service and manufacturing sectors. It is unsurprising therefore that they may follow the migrant experience and trajectory of the Filipino *nikkeijin sansei* and *yonsei* since the same brokers and placement agencies hiring the Filipino *nikkeijin* are the same group looking toward these JFC and *Shin-nikkeijin* for possible *dekasegi* deployment.

scene, using their free time to produce amateur music videos of their rap music all the while showcasing and using various Filipino iconographies and images. While these displays of Filipinoness seems to be patriotic in character, he explains that more nationalism, their use of Filipino images and hip-hop music represents the "gangsta culture" or "ghetto mentality" that they experience in Japan. Instead of using such images as a sign of Filipino nationalism, it expresses their feelings of marginalization, of their frustration in not fitting in Japan.[115] This shows how their practice and usage of Filipinoness does not fit into the discourses promoted by neither official nor alternative nationalism.

In contrast to how the adopted youths express their Filipinoness, the JFC meanwhile pine to seek their Japanese identity. This is expressed by the JFC youth groups organized by such NGOs such as DAWN and *Batis* in the Philippines (Batis 2009). While they may seek their Japanese identity, for the youths who have been able to visit and work in Japan, they also feel the being "neither here nor there" detachment that the *Nikkeijin* commonly experience while in Japan - that of feeling like a foreigner in the Philippines, but at the same time, also being seen as a Filipino in Japan. These themes will be discussed in the next section as we see the parallelisms that the JFC or *Shin-Nikkeijin* share with the Filipino *Nikkeijins*.

**C. Filipino *Nikkeijin***

After discussing the JFC, another group of Filipinos with ethnic ties to Japan are the Filipino *nikkeijin*. Although making up around 17% (35,717) of registered Filipino migrants in Japan by 2008 the existence of Filipino *nikkeijin* in Japan is not as well known both in the Philippines and in Japan.[116], Furthermore, unlike the Latin American *nikkeijin* communities, Filipino *nikkeijin* were war-stigmatized Japanese descendants and as such followed very different social and life trajectories as their Latin American

[115] Interview with Santiago 2012.

[116] Although they make up the majority of "long-term" resident visa holders, the exact numbers of Filipino *nikkeijin* in Japan are not available since these descendants are given a "long-term" resident visa status, which is also the same visa category given to JFCs and special cases of migrants, such as divorced or widowed Filipino mothers of Japanese children. Furthermore, the numbers of Filipino *nikkeijin* who are now permanent visa holders or naturalized citizens are also not available.

counterparts.[117] In his pioneering research on Filipino *nikkeijin* communities, Ohno explains that Filipino *nikkeijin* are descendants of the Japanese who emigrated to the Philippines before and during the Second World War, who have remained in the country of their birth even after the end of the war (2008, 1991). Categorized into three generations, namely that of the *Nisei* (second generation), *Sansei* (third generation) and *Yonsei* (fourth generation), the Filipino *nikkei* communities had to overcome the stigma of being called "collaborators" or the "children of the enemy", which consequently led to their lower social status, limited access to education and serious poverty.

However as the stigma of war gradually disappeared and as Japan emerged as a global economic power, becoming one of the biggest economic partners of the Philippines since the 1970s, the Filipino *Nisei* and their children (*Sansei*) began to campaign toward the Japanese state to recognize their Japanese ancestry so that they and the succeeding generations could "return" to Japan with a long-term resident visa. With the revised Immigration Control Law of 1990 allowing worldwide *Nisei*, *Sansei* and their spouses and children the privilege of working in Japan, the number of Filipino Nikkei migrants began to grow since the 1990s. Although facing several problems such as need to successfully identify their ethnicity through cross checking with Japan's *koseki* family registration system, the *dekasegi* (literally emigration to earn money) phenomenon has brought the massive labor migration of Filipino *Sansei* from *nikkei* communities in Davao, Baguio and other areas.[118]

With the *Sansei* and *Yonsei* migrating to Japan to earn a living for their *Nisei* parents and their families in the Philippines, these Filipino *nikkeijin* has found their

[117] To emphasize the problems of war-stigmatization and the lack of recognition of the *Nisei's* Japanese identity, the *Nisei* have been labeled as *Firipin Zanryu Nihonjin* (literally Japanese left behind in the Philippines). This term also evokes the tragic family breakup during and after the war, and has appealed to the Japanese government for compensation and recognition as full fledged yet unrecognized Japanese nationals (Ohno 2008: 4-5). The term *Zanryu Nihonjin* also refers to similar Japanese nationals who were left behind in the war-torn Japanese territories in Manchuria and other parts of China.

[118] Ohno explains that official documents such as the *koseki-tohon* (copy of family registry) is needed to prove their consanguinity with the Japanese and to obtain their long-term resident visas. This has become a problematic process due to several reasons, such as the failure of *Issei* Japanese emigrants to register their families in the Philippines, or the losing or abandoning of *koseki-tohon* by the *Nissei* to conceal their identities in light of the post-war hostile environment (2008: 6).

"ethnic return migration" as difficult and challenging.[119] Since they are of mixed Japanese-Filipino parentage, coupled with their non-mastery of the Japanese language since their employers do not require them to learn the language in the factories and their work places of mostly blue-collar labor, they were seen as foreigner or Filipinos in Japan, rather than as "Japanese" returning home. Furthermore, their trajectory as migrant workers to Japan also is in line with the Philippine states discourse of promoting labor migration as OFWs, as such, Filipino *nikkeijin* have managed maintained their Filipino identity even as they show patterns of settlement and permanent residency. Ohno reiterates this from his survey data which show that a substantial number of young Philippine *Nikkeijin* residents in Japan have retained their self-identity as Filipino, and that their earlier dual identity has become weakened or become ambiguous after their emigration to Japan (2008: 13).

After discussing how the Filipino *nikkeijin* seek to be fully integrated to Japanese society, another aspect worth exploring is the duality of identities that these Filipino *nikkeijin* possess. In particular, how the Filipino *nikkeijin* are trapped between their being Japanese in the Philippines, while being Filipino in Japan, they have shown a version of national identity that does not fit within the typologies of official nor alternative nationalism. Describing the Filipino nikkeijin community as having "deterritorialized identity", Ohno describes this as "one's sense of belonging to the nation that is outside his/her residential territory or the absence of belonging to any national territory" (2008: 3). Related to their national identity is how these Filipino nikkeijin have shown agency by their pragmatic and instrumental understanding and use of their citizenship status. Similar to Tigno's argument that the settled Filipinos in Japan have pragmatic views on their Japanese and Filipino citizenship (2008), Ohno explores the same phenomenon among the *nikkeijin*:

> Their acquisition of a permanent visa and/or a Japanese nationality, what I call transnational citizenship, is their survival strategy to ensure their right to reside in Japan and to work permanently there. Transnational citizenship is primarily for instrumental purposes, and does not mean the loss of Filipino identity, which they acquired in their younger days. It can also be interpreted as a manifestation of their having a multi-ethnic dual identity... Their unstable employment and daily encounters with native Japanese who tend to regard them as "foreigners" make their full assimilation with Japanese society difficult even after their long-term

[119] This refers to later-generation descendants of diasporic peoples who "return" to their countries of ancestral origin after living outside their ethnic homelands (Tsuda 2009).

> settlement in Japan. As a consequence, their national/ethnic identity tends to be diasporic and/or deterritorialized (2008: 16).

The pragmatic nature of their constant movement is highlighted during the economic crisis of late 2000s in which the Filipino nikkeijin community was affected by the loss of jobs in Japan, forcing some of them to go back to the Philippines (Takahata 2011a).

After discussing the main trends and how these groups attempt to exhibit their agency and demotic interpretation of nationalist discourses, the next section will discuss the next phase which highlights how most of the previous groups see the work types and statuses in the next phase as their best chance for "redemption" and social acceptance in Japan.

#### 5.3.2.3. Phase 3 - Caregivers and ALTs (2000's - onwards)

As discussed in the previous section, the work types associated with the third phase of redemption represents the ideals and hope of the Filipino diaspora community to be accepted and integrated to Japanese society. The next section will highlight how migrant communities from former entertainers and *Zainichi*, to *Nikkeijin* and JFCs view the chance to be caregivers and ALT teachers as a genuine chance not only for higher social status in Japan, but above all improving the image of the Filipino people in their adopted host societies. These job types also represents the logic that the Global Filipino discourse and official state policy that reiterates under the RA 8042:
"The State recognizes that the ultimate protection to all migrant workers is the possession of skills. Pursuant to this and as soon as practicable, the government shall deploy and/or allow the deployment only of skilled Filipino workers" (Ofreneo & Samonte 2005: 15). While it does coincide with official state discourse, the various migrant groups nevertheless have their own demotic interpretation of their situation.

**A. Caregivers**

In her study exploring the provisions of the JPEPA toward the entry and training of Filipino caregivers and nurses in Japan, Ballescas distinguishes between two groups who are vying for work in the healthcare sector. She refers to the group of healthcare workers from the Philippines who are included in the JPEPA provisions as being *Rainichi*, while the former entertainers and spouses meanwhile are called *Zainichi*. After

exploring the issues and system set-up for the introduction of foreign healthcare workers, Ballescas argues that the provisions of the JPEPA are short-sighted and unsustainable, and as such it would be better if the Japanese government explore and maximize the potential for the *Zainichi* migrants instead (2007).

Other than tapping the existing resource of Filipino migrants, Ballescas also discusses the redemptive quality that healthcare work may have for these Filipina women. During interviews and field visits done with Ballescas on a previous study, this author was able to visit several caregiving training schools in Tokyo and Nagoya and was able to do get some survey data and interview questions. The main theme that reflected time and time again was the hope for the Filipina women to be finally accepted to Japanese society due to the higher social standing and noble deeds that caregiving and caring for the elderly promises. Indeed, several studies have been done on the experiences and the challenges these care workers have faced and how various support groups - from Filipina care workers associations, such as the Licensed Filipino Caregivers Association in Japan (LFCAJ), to church groups and training centers themselves all have been attempting to train these Zainichi and help them get employment in the healthcare sector (Ogawa 2012, 2009, Lopez 2010, Hirano etal 2010, Takahata 2010).

While various scholars have discussed the redemptive value of working as healthcare workers for the Filipino diaspora in Japan, Ballescas nevertheless sees it as merely perpetuating the gender statuses and expectation directed toward the Filipino women in Japan. She explains that while entertainers and wives are brought in Japan for their reproductive labor, it is natural that this same group now is transitioning towards the maximization of their affective labor. Indeed this way of thinking is represented when both caregiver groups, *Zainichi* associations and Japanese training schools frequently refer to the natural traits of Filipino women as caring, emphatic and showing genuine care (Ogawa 2012, Ballescas 2007).

**B. Assistant Language Teachers (ALT)**

The 2000's have seen settled Filipino migrants as slowly being accepted work as English language teachers mostly as Assistant Language Teachers (ALT). Began in 1987

to promote internationalization in Japan's local communities by helping to improve foreign language education and developing international exchange at the community level (CLAIR 2009), ALTs are sent to various schools within their districts and do their teaching duties through “team-teaching” with their Japanese counterparts in public Elementary, Junior and Senior High schools. While ALT jobs were traditionally filled by the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme since the 1980s, the growing demand for ALT through the expansion of public English education towards elementary school levels (Fukuda 2010) and the growing hiring costs has led education boards to hire ALTs through various employment agencies that specialize in hiring settled migrants already living in Japan, instead of direct hiring from foreign countries.

Being the fourth largest migrant group in Japan and with their excellent command of English, Filipinos were targeted by the burgeoning ALT sector. Although Filipinos face varying levels of market segmentation and salary discrimination, this hasn't stopped these “native-level speakers” from filling this niche market and has led to the sudden increase of English language teachers and ALT among Filipinos since the 2000s.[120]

In order to highlight the conditions and dynamics among Filipino ALTs with their Japanese and foreign colleagues in Japan, this research interviewed Salvador, a long-time ESL teacher specializing in English learning for children. He explains that work as ALTs and English teachers is a good chance for Filipinos to have a decent living and above all is a chance for Filipinos to uplift their image brought upon by the negative stereotypes portrayed by the Japayuki discourse. In explaining his role as an English language teacher and later into a trainer for other ESL professionals, Salvador recounts how at first he had a difficult start as an English teacher. He explains that he had to work hard to get an interview for employment since most English conversation schools were only seeking Caucasian "native-speakers". Due to his perseverance, he was able to land a job at the "international school", but he had to face several challenges due to his ethnicity. Having a fair complexion, he was asked to simply downplay his ethnicity. As

[120] ALT teachers are usually given a Specialist in Humanities or Instructor Visa. Although the number of Filipino ALTs have increased, their low number in official figures point to the provision that students, spouses, dependents with work permits or permanent residents are allowed to work as ALT with no need to change their residency status.

the years went on, his passion for work and his easy rapport with kids led him to be one of the more popular teachers among the Japanese kids. His reputation of creating innovative activities and games that he formulated mostly from Filipino games of his childhood, led him to be invited as a guest trainer and spokesperson for the Oxford University Press in Japan to promote their ESL materials. His interactions with fellow ESL teachers and with the growth of Filipino ALTs in Japan, led him to create his own company, the Institute for English Teaching to Children (IETC) and a teacher's support group, the *Mabuhay English Club*, in order to provide teaching workshops for Filipino ALTs.[121]

Since he has been living in Japan in the past 20 years and had seen first hand the changing character of the Filipino diaspora in Japan, he sees that ALT work, as well as caregiving is an opportunity for Filipinos to work in more decent jobs, and in the process be accepted by the larger Japanese society. During our interview, he explains that while his training sessions does provide for his income, he sees it as a means to reach out and help the Filipino community in Japan by helping make the Filipino reputation as being synonymous not as entertainer or workers, but rather as professional and humanistic English teachers.[122] These themes are also reflected in the study done by San Jose and Ballescas wherein they argue that: "The ALT experience offers another positive site of engagement toward the incorporation of the Filipino and the rest of the foreign community as a whole within Japanese society by allowing foreigners to be more visible in society"(2010:164). Indeed, Salvador and the ALTs clearly see their work as English teachers as a means for social mobility and integration to the larger Japanese society.

In discussing the demotic dimension on how they practice nationalism, Filipino ALTs and English teachers too have a negotiated view on how they practice and interpret their nationalism. In our discussion on how they see their work as Filipino English teachers in Japan, Salvador explains that he doesn't see any contradiction in his being "nationalistic" while at the same time, living as a permanent resident in Japan. Exploring these themes on how Filipinos are supposed to come back to the homeland in

[121] *Mabuhay* in English means "long-live!". Interview with Salvador 2012.
[122] Interview with Salvador 2012.

order to help develop it, he sees himself as still loving the Filipino homeland, although for him, the country is simply the place where his old home and family lives. He explains that since he lives in Japan with his Japanese wife and daughter, Japan is already his primary home. In closer analysis, Salvador doesn't see Filipino patriotism to be expressed only by going back home to the homeland or simply sending remittances for economic development, rather he sees that the most important thing for migrants like him is to work not for the homeland but for the Filipino people.[123]

His way of thinking was evident when I experienced first-hand how he relates to other Filipino ALTs when we attended a workshop for ALTs in Tokyo. During the course of his lecture workshop on practical tips to be an engaging and effective ALT for Japanese children, it is quite evident that he is well-liked and accepted, with the ALTs seeing him as a "*panalo*" - a self-made man who has made it in Japanese society through sheer hard work and force of personality. In him, they see that they too can be successful English teacher although they all came from various backgrounds and line of work before becoming ALTs.[124]

In discussing the retention rates of Filipino ALTs and trends in the future, Salvador explains that not everyone can be successful ALTs. However to maintain the positive image that Filipinos are now enjoying as teachers, it is important to help each other to maintain the Filipino positive image which is still precarious and fickle on the Japanese point of view. In reflecting on how his Filipino identity and nationality affects his work, he explains that while before being Filipino was a setback, now he is proud in being a Filipino and above all, he now sees it as an advantage - even compared to other native speakers in Japan, since Filipinos are now the largest group of potential future ALT / ESL teachers which are still in demand.[125]

In closer analysis on how Salvador and the other ALTs practice their demotic nationalism, it is quite clear that pragmatism plays a big role in their community. Rather

[123] Interview with Salvador 2012.

[124] In San Jose and Ballescas' study exploring the advent of Filipino ALTs in Japan, survey data shows that Filipino ALTs were previously employed in various sectors - from education - former teachers and scholars, to manufacturing (those working in factories, especially for Filipino *Nikkeijin* who are now ALTs) and other service oriented work (2010).

[125] Interview with Salvador 2012.

than focus on the outward trappings of Filipinoness, on formal citizenship status, and frequency of sending remittances or going back to the homeland, most ALTs and permanent residents in Japan, see that it is the national identity and common shared diasporic experiences as English teachers in Japan that describes their role and place in Philippine and Japanese society.

After discussing the primacy of demotic nationalism and how migrant groups exhibit their agency by discussing these themes as three phases of redemption, the next section will then focus on how all of the diaspora nationalism and the actions of Filipino migrant groups in Japan attempt to go beyond the narratives of victimhood and in the process, reimagine the Filipino nation as existing within spaces in their adopted communities in Japan.

### 5.3.3. The Demotic Interpretation of Migrant Discourses

After discussing how the typologies of diaspora nationalism is practiced in Japan and the role of demotic nationalism in shaping the phases of change of the Filipino diaspora in Japan, this section will look further into the various discourses promoted and attached to the lives of the diaspora. In particular, it will explore the discourses that is promoted by both the Philippine and Japan side - namely that of the *Japayuki*, *Bagong Bayani* and the Global Filipino. In order to discern these themes, this section also asks how the migrants view and understand the following discourses by reflecting on these questions as well: What is nationalism? Who consists of the Filipino community? What is the Filipino identity? As discussed in the previous chapters, the discourses and narratives promoted by the state and advocacy groups are interpreted and understood differently the diaspora. This section will review how the Filipino diaspora in Japan understand and view the discourses of the OFW, *Bagong Bayani, Balikbayan*, Global Filipino and the *Japayuki*.

#### 5.3.3.1. OFW and the *Bagong Bayani*

In discussing the concept of the OFW and *Bagong Bayani*, the image that it invokes is that of a blue-collar worker. Salvador explains that for him, the OFW and *Bagong Bayani* often invokes a negative image, one who is vulnerable and also someone who is

not assimilated in the host country.[126] Conversely, while the discourse of the *Bagong Bayani* was created to appeal to the emotions and pride of the OFW, Perez explains that based on his experience as a migrant worker, the *Bagong Bayani* has no resonance for the Filipinos in Japan. He believes that it was only created not for the Filipinos already working abroad, but rather for the Filipinos back home[127], which promotes the "culture of migration" (Asis 2006b). For him, at most, the *Bagong Bayani* discourse is merely used to promote a sense of nostalgia and sentimentality. While anecdotal, Filipinos are mostly critical of the bagong bayani discourse especially when they suffer with their interactions with the Philippine state - from frustration with the embassy staff or sadness due to the weakness of the state in providing protection for its citizens abroad.

While most of the discussions on the *Bagong Bayani* and OFW relate to blue-collar temporary workers sent abroad, Chua argues that the *Bagong Bayani* does not exist in Japan. She explains that while the *Balikbayan* refers to the white-collar workers or nurses going to the US, the *Bagong Bayani* meanwhile refers to the construction workers to Saudi and the domestic helpers in Hong Kong, the entertainers and mail-order brides are not included in the nomenclature of the *Bagong Bayani*. Rather they are the "hidden migrants", which she likens to the prostituted daughter that the family (the state) is ashamed of. It is this grey zone, wherein the state benefits from the sending of entertainers to Japan, while at the same time, they are ashamed of the work done by their "daughters" in Japan. Furthermore, while the state is aware of the gender issues, criticisms of human trafficking and the problems related to the sending of *Japayukis* to Japan, they are nevertheless helpless and powerless to address the underlying issues related to entertainer migration to Japan. As such, for Chua, Filipino migrants in Japan are not heroes (*bagong bayani*) but the shameful and hidden prostituted daughter (*Japayuki*).[128]

#### 5.3.3.2. *Balikbayan*

While the discourse of the *Balikbayan* was created by the Marcos government to appeal to Filipino émigré tourism and long-distance development initiatives, it has

[126] Interview with Salvador 2012.
[127] Interview with Perez 2012.
[128] Interview with Chua 2012.

become synonymous to the permanent migrant residents or naturalized overseas Filipinos in the US, Canada or Australia. Another dimension refers to the largely white-collar and skilled workers who go to these migrant destinations. As such for Perez, his mother fits the profile of a balikbayan. After spending more than 20 years in Japan as an educator, his mother was able to finally go home for good in the Philippines, and reach her dream of building her own school in their hometown. Thus, she represents the idealized *balikbayan* - someone who made it big, a *panalo*, who was able to provide for his family and settle back home. Indeed, Perez recalls how his mother explained the life of a balikbayan. She likens *balikbayan* as salmon, who after how many years of travelling to different oceans of the world take the final trip back home to where they were born and raised.[129]

Salvador also agrees to the conception of the balikbayan. For him, *balikbayan* refer to professionals going to the US who ultimately go back home to a triumphant return. As such, he believes that the balikbayan mostly refers to Filipino-Americans and permanent residents. When asked on whether he considers himself as a balikbayan due to his success and white-collar profession, he explains that he isn't a balikbayan since he doesn't plan to go back home while his family is in Japan.[130]

#### 5.3.3.3. Global Filipino

Similar to the *Balikbayan* discourse, the Global Filipino mostly refers to the ideal white-collar and skilled worker who is global in their skills and outlook. However unlike the *balikbayan*, the Global Filipino has a stronger cosmopolitan feel to it, which in the process marginalizes the ever-growing blue-collar Filipino laborers (San Jose 2008).[131]

For Salvador, the Global Filipino is a good sign since it represents the ideals of the highly skilled and cosmopolitan Filipino worker that he and fellow ALT/English teachers in Japan aspire to. While the Global Filipino has a positive image, Santiago is quite critical of the discourse. For him, the Global Filipino is only used for commercial

[129] Interview with Perez 2012.
[130] Interview with Salvador 2012.
[131] A more nuanced discussion on the concept of the "Global Filipino" and the "Global Filipino nation" was discussed in chapter three and will be reiterated in the final chapter of this dissertation.

purposes and mass media images. He relates how various ethnic businesses and a Filipino media outlet, namely the ABS-CBN's TFC channel and Inquirer, uses it to appeal to Filipinos abroad. They promote a sense of accomplishment and pride in the Filipino, stating that "*global na talaga ang Pinoy*" (wow, Filipinos are truly global in reach!). While this maybe true for some cases, the Filipino experience in Japan is still very different from other permanent residents based in the US. Furthermore, he sees the Global Filipino label as not applicable to the Zainichi since they are too embedded and "assimilated" to Japanese society.[132]

#### 5.3.3.4. *Japayuki* Discourse

As explained earlier, one of the main issues that are a concern for the Filipino diaspora community in Japan is how they attempt to go beyond the *Japayuki* discourse. For NGOs and state agencies, they attempt to address the issues related to the migration of entertainers to Japan by focusing on gender empowerment and also anti-trafficking policies. While the anti-trafficking policies pursued by the Philippine government has been weak and limited to various regulatory actions, which are ineffective, and burdensome for the entertainers, various NGOs in Japan and the Philippines meanwhile had various campaigns to address the issues faced by entertainers. With a focus on gender and anti-trafficking, NGOs such as the *Batis* Center, Dawn and *Maligaya* House, have interventions that include rescue and repatriation to the Philippines, alternative livelihood for those who came back, support systems for paternity issues (for JFC) and campaigns to stop the trafficking of entertainers.

While these NGOs provide valuable service, gender and advocacy groups especially in Japan tend to focus too much on addressing the push factors of poverty, under-employment and lack of information as pushing the women to blindly go to Japan. While these are indeed important points, it nevertheless doesn't address the tendency of highlighting the victimhood of the women, and in the process, deny their agency. Furthermore, focusing too much on the Philippine side merely reinforces the negative stereotypes and images of the *Japayuki* discourse. Which see that these women are poor and pitiful leading them to go to Japan, becoming the "bad women" and victims that needs to be rescued (Suzuki 2002, Yamanaka 1993). As such, they focus on

[132] Interview with Santiago 2012

victimhood doesn't address the pull factors and the limitations of Japanese labor policy for these women.[133] Furthermore, the continuation of the *Japayuki* discourse makes the integration of former entertainers and the Filipino diaspora at large much more difficult.

Other than some Japanese advocacy groups inadverted perpetuating the Japayuki discourse, Philippine based advocacy groups also mirror the view of the victimhood of the Japayuki. For the alternative nationalist organizations, it is only natural that they subscribe to the thinking of the victimized Filipino since it follows their world-view of the exploited and disciplined worker that the state continually exploits (Rodriguez 2010).

Again, while these points are important, this discounts the agency and empowerment of the Filipino women in Japan. As explained by Chua, these women are not weak and have their own avenues to express their agency. Above all, their practice of agency is related to how they understand and negotiate the discourses of diaspora nationalism directed towards them. As discussed in this section, the common thread that can be viewed from the discussions regarding the *Bagong Bayani*, OFW, Global Filipino and *Japayuki* is the goal of migrants to go beyond victimhood and vulnerability, as they negotiate between the discourses and agendas promoted by the state and advocacy groups.

### 5.3.4. Analyzing the Primacy of Demotic Nationalism

The previous sections discussed how the Filipino diaspora community in Japan had gone through three phases of redemption or integration and how this process relates to their demotic interpretation of discourses directed towards the diaspora community. As these sections have shown, the dynamics between diaspora nationalisms and three phases of diaspora community clearly reflects the primacy of demotic nationalism. In analyzing the primacy of demotic nationalism, two major themes can be discerned.

[133] Entertainers are not protected by labor laws since they are "guest performers" and only have short-term contracts, leading the women to have a hard time forming roots or creating lasting support network (Parrenas 2010).

First, advocacy groups in Japan, although not as strong in their campaigns and mass mobilizations as their advocacy counterparts in Hong Kong, has commonalities among the Filipino diaspora community in Japan. Although they might not have strong mass mobilizations and protest actions, they share the same sentiment in their criticism to the *Bagong Bayani* discourse. Not merely criticizing the concept of the modern day hero by saying that they are not heroes but are in fact martyrs, they go beyond this by exposing the hypocrisy of the state. Their main contention is that the state cannot explicitly expound on the virtues and sacrifices of the *Bagong Bayani* when they are in fact the biggest pimp, the main salesman of the Filipina *Japayuki*. In this sense, both the anti-*Bagong Bayani* feelings of the advocacy groups and diaspora communities are a reaction to the negative impact of the *Japayuki* discourse, which is both, promoted and reitified both by the Philippine and Japanese state.

Second, although both advocacy groups and diaspora communities share common criticisms against the Philippine state on the *Bagong Bayani* discourse, there is nevertheless a disjoint in their focus. For alternative nationalists, they are truly critical of the policies of labor and entertainer export to Japan, believing that these issues can only be addressed through advocacy campaigns and critical actions against the state. However, the problem with this approach is that inadvertedly, they have the tendency to do so in a condescending manner. This is expressed in their belief that migrants should be "rescued" and then be "repatriated" back to the homeland. While their intentions might be true, diaspora communities have their own interpretation. For them, they react to the *Japayuki* discourse by focusing on their agency against these negative images. This is reflected on the three phases of redemption / integration. These migrants try their best to integrate to Japanese society and find their place through redemptive methods - joining social and philanthropic activities, being active in social groups, interacting with Japanese local communities and being productive members as skilled and in-demand health care workers and English teachers. Furthermore, their reaction to the negative images of the *Japayuki* discourse and the labor policies of state is not merely to protest against these policies or to come back home for good. Rather, their focus is really on getting positive outcomes while having a pragmatic notion on how to best engage in their host Japanese societies.

## 5.4. Beyond Narratives of Victimhood and Reimagining the Nation

This section will discuss various themes related to how the Filipino diaspora in Japan view and understand the concepts of the nation, national identity, and how this leads to the reimagining of the Filipino nation, both as existing inside Japan and in the homeland itself. While their views vary on these themes, this section will show that more than how official and alternative nationalism promote their version of the nation, its national borders and formal citizenship status, the demotic dimension among migrants gives credence instead to Filipino identity, Filipinoness and shared lived experience.

### 5.4.1. The Presence of the Filipino Nation in Japan

#### 5.4.1.1. Imagining the Filipino Nation while in Japan

While the Anderson mentioned the importance of a "finite borders" in how nations are imagined (2003), recent scholars have been pointing out the deterritoriality of nations and the transnational dimension that migrants face in our age of globalization (Basch etal 1994). Similar on how these scholars have diverging opinions on whether nations have finite borders, views on the extent of the Filipino nation also differs. For Santiago, the Filipino nation cannot exist in Japan, since most of the Zainichi and permanent residents already have been assimilated and above all, only have rudimentary and shallow links to their Filipino homeland. On the contrary, Chua believes that in fact the Philippines do exist in Japan. This is due to the fact that since these Filipino women are and cannot be genuinely assimilated or integrated to the larger Japanese society, then enclaves and ghettos are present, whether in physical and geographic manifestations (such as the Sakai district in Nagoya) or through social conceptualization of Filipino social groups in their various host communities.[134] While Santiago and Chua have opposite views on the existence of the nation, which they base on whether the Filipino diaspora is assimilated or not, Tigno meanwhile argues that the diaspora is already assimilated and at the same time believe in the existence of the Filipino nation in Japan. In his study exploring the deterritoriality of the nation in Filipino communities in Kyoto, Tigno explores the manifestations and practice of

[134] For a more detailed discussion and case study of the Filipino community in the Sakai district, see Takahata (2012a, 2007).

nationalism and the presence of a deterritorialized Philippines through the activities and gatherings of the Filipinos in their social activities.

Using case studies of Filipino communities in the Kansai region, Tigno explores how Filipinos in Japan constitute a process of creating a "home away from home" and are able to recreate the Filipino nation abroad by way of serializing and replicating religious, commercial, cultural and political practices that have become familiar with back home in the Philippines (2008). Among these practices, the strongest purveyor of Filipinoness in Japan is through the reproduction of Filipino religiosity.[135] Tigno explains:

> The celebration of the Catholic mass plays an essential part not only in terms of providing a social outlet and support network to Filipinos who are lonely and depressed overseas (particularly in non-Christian territories) but also in terms of reproducing their Filipinoness in the process. For some, religion is the only way by which they can return to their roots as Filipinos. Going to church (even if it is on an irregular basis) and going through the motions of its ceremonies simply becomes the *sine qua non* of being Filipino (2008: 24).

Other than citing the role of ethnic Filipino commerce and the use of Filipino language in various mass media enterprises in Japan, Tigno gives special emphasis on the question of citizenship among Filipinos in Japan:

> Citizenship acquisition/retention is also a pragmatic concern for Filipinos in Japan. However, Philippine retention appears to be the serialized norm. Filipinos in Japan have a pragmatic attitude towards acquiring foreign citizenship. Long-term Filipino residents prefer to retain their Philippine citizenship partly out of practical necessity and partly in recognition of the reality that they cannot be considered truly Japanese no matter how long they stay in Japan (2008:29).

#### 5.4.1.2. Understanding Filipino Nationalism

During our discussion on how nationalism is understood by the Filipino diaspora in Japan, Santiago suggested that since nationalism is a complex term that has multiple meanings, perhaps a better concept would be patriotism since its outward manifestations are easy to discern. Expounding on this theme, he opines that presently, the Filipino diaspora in Japan, especially those who are permanent residents and have families are already detached from the homeland. Since they hardly come home to the

[135] With the country distinguishing itself as the "only Catholic nation in Asia", majority of the Filipino population are Catholics. Thus, religious practice and religiosity are deeply rooted in the national psyche.

Philippines and already concentrate on their families in Japan, rather than sending remittances back home, the Filipino diaspora interacts the nation only in their interactions in social media, through Facebook messages and Skype calls to love ones in the Philippines.

While the permanent residents are already detached from the homeland, it is the Japanese-Filipino youths and the ALTs who exhibit patriotism and outward signs of nationalism.[136] While they exhibit signs of nationalism, we can discern that these groups have instrumental and pragmatic reasons, which go beyond usual concepts of patriotism. In the case of the Japanese-Filipino youths, their use of Filipino iconography, language and symbolisms in their hip-hop performances does not necessarily reflect their nostalgia or loyalty to the homeland. Rather, their use of Filipinoness serves as markers that highlight their *gangsta* or ghetto mentality. Similar to how hip-hop serves as an expression for African-American to highlight their problems to the larger US society so do these youth use Filipino hip-hop to emphasize that they are marginalized and discriminated upon by the larger Japanese society.[137]

While the youths emphasize their Filipinoness as a sign of their marginalization, the Filipino ALTs meanwhile use their Filipino identity in a positive light. While Filipinos English teachers were initially seen as being not as good as other native-speakers, with more experience and skills training, Filipino ALTs are now seen as competent and more passionate English teachers by their Japanese counterparts. Indeed, similar to Salvador's adage that "As teachers we are to be judged as a people",

[136] The phenomenon in which a portion of Filipino migrants in Japan, notably the permanent migrants in Japan are already detached to homeland while at the same time, ALTs (first generation) and Japanese Filipino youths (first and second generation children) as exhibiting strong markings of patriotisms seem to differ from Hansen's law. In a 1938 essay, "The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant", the Hansen's Law states that: "What the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember". Discussing the assimilation of migrants to the US, historian Hansen observes that the 1st generation migrants have a hard time to assimilate to the host society and therefore look toward the homeland. The 2nd generation meanwhile are born and raised in the host society, and as such are almost completely assimilated and only have faint ties to the homeland. Finally, the 3rd generation often seeks their roots and makes efforts to visit and maintain ties to the homeland (Hansen 1940, 1938). This phenomenon is observable in the Filipino diaspora in the US (Aguilar 2004), but the Filipinos in Japan are showing trends that suggest some divergence that could be researched further.

[137] Interview with Santiago 2012.

more and more Filipinos are becoming proud of their nationality - highlighting that they too are as good and in fact more passionate than native-speakers in their teaching.[138] In closer analysis, the Filipino ALTs use the Filipino stereotypes to their advantage. Similar to how caregivers say that they are skilled workers since they are "compassionate", these ALTs also show that they are "friendly and compassionate" to their students.

While Santiago discusses the practice and feelings of patriotism by the Filipino diaspora in Japan, Chua is quite critical on how Filipinos practice nationalism. In her opinion, Filipinos cannot be nationalistic since they lack the sense of what being a true Filipino and what the true Filipino is. This is related to the reason why Filipinos are still victims in Japan, which she sees as the product of their gender, of their colonial experience and experiences of racism in their adopted communities abroad.

Expounding on these themes, Chua explains that migrants have a shallow interpretation and understanding of Filipino nationalism. This is reflected on how Filipinos simply limit themselves to outward trappings of Filipinoness and culture through occasional celebrations and socio-cultural events, such as Independence Day celebrations, Filipino church activities and Filipino cultural festivals in Japan. Since the Filipino diaspora is quite weak in their understanding of Filipinoness, she opines that it is only natural for Filipinos to have difficulty in finding a Filipino identity when Filipinos have no genuine concept of the nation, wherein Filipinos have no historical memory of their colonial and current experiences.[139]

### 5.4.2. Reimagining the Filipino Nation from the Homeland

While the previous section discussed how the Filipino diaspora in Japan has imagined the Filipino nation as existing within their host communities in Japan, this section will discuss how people in the homeland, particularly those with families in the diaspora, have begun to reimagine the homeland as already changing due to the diaspora experience. As explained in the literature review section of the second chapter of this thesis, the Filipino people had already imagined the nation as existing outside the national borders. However, this was mainly limited to the migrants leaving for the US,

[138] Interview with Salvador 2012.
[139] Interview with Chua 2012.

which Aguilar (2004) describes as the Filipino people's national Other. Due to the colonial experience and the belief in the American dream, Filipinos have begun to initially reimagine the nation as existing in the US while being part of the Filipino global diaspora, coinciding with the massive flow of migrants who then settle permanently in the US and Hawaii (Okamura 1998). However as Aguilar explains, with the advent of Filipino overseas labor migration to various destinations across the globe, the Filipino diaspora experience has led the Filipino people to rethink the role of the US. As such, the US is not the sole national Other of the Filipino nation, rather it is already the whole globe itself that has become the national Other (2004).

Taking off from Aguilar's discussion on the rethinking of the national Other, we can then argue that the Filipino diaspora experience in Japan has led the nation to reimagine the scope of the nation as moving beyond the national borders. Indeed, Japan has a big place in the national imagination of the Philippines. As this chapter had discussed, Japan is changing from a temporary labor destination, into a permanent settlement destination. As more and more Filipinos become permanent residents in Japan, together with the growing number of second and third generation migrants / Japanese Filipino youths, Japan has in fact become the second America for Filipinos (Ventura 2006). Furthermore, while Japan used to be the destination of the *Japayuki* with its negative images and experiences, now Filipinos in the homeland had begun to see that the Filipino diaspora community already exists in Japan and at the same time, even the Filipino nation can exist within the borders of Japan.

#### 5.4.2.1. Deconstructing Imagined Communities

This chapter shows evidence to support the main theme of this study that argues that the Filipino diaspora experience has led to the reimagining of the Filipino nation. Deconstructing Anderson's imagined communities (2003), this chapter has shown that it has gone beyond the four main themes presented by Anderson, namely that of imagined, limited, sovereign and community.

Deconstructing "imagined", the nation is being reimagined not only by the Filipino diaspora communities in Japan, but above all by their families and the common Filipino in the homeland. Indeed, the massive flows of Filipino labor migrants to Japan since the

1980's, the impact of their remittances and donations, and the prevalence of the *Japayuki* discourse, has led the everyday Filipino to think that Filipinos do live in Japan and as such, the nation does exist within these diaspora communities abroad. Deconstructing "limited", due to the Philippine diaspora experience, more and more Filipinos have begun to reimagine the nation as existing beyond the limited borders of the Philippine nation-state. Indeed, with the Filipino permanent migrants making up the majority of the Filipino diaspora community in Japan and its growth as a destination for permanent migration, Japan as becoming the "second America" for Filipinos and consequently, the concept of a truly Global Filipino nation is taking hold. In this sense, the Filipino nation has become unlimited and inclusive in its scope, with the nation becoming deterritorialized.

Deconstructing "sovereign", when before it was the state that had primacy over the Philippine diaspora experience, the years have shown that while the state plays a big role, overall it does not hold sway as it used to. Although the state and advocacy groups continually debate on the policies of labor export to Japan, together with their reaction on the negative image brought about by the Japayuki discourse, migrants do have their own demotic interpretation of their situations. This is shown by how they continually negotiate their Filipino identity and how they go through the various phases of redemption/integration to the larger Japanese society. As have been clearly shown in this chapter, although the various social actors have various views on the *Japayuki* discourse and other related themes, overall migrants are shaped by their pragmatic values. Indeed the case studies have shown that they are more concerned on having a successful migrant journey (*panalo*) that is related to how they strive to find redemption and aim to reintegrate to their new host communities in Japan.

Lastly, deconstructing "community", the Global Filipino nation is described as having an expansive community that shares strong horizontal bonds. These bonds are not based on the state with its formal citizenship status and laws; rather the community is based on Filipino identity, Filipinoness and shared lived diaspora experiences. Therefore, this extends to diaspora communities whether it is in Japan or in their home communities in the homeland and also extends whether a Filipino is a *bilog*, an entertainer, a spouse, a Japanese youth, a healthcare worker or a Filipino English

teacher.

## 5.5. Summary: Demotic Nationalism and the Reimagining of Global Filipino Nation in Japan

### 5.5.1. The Changing Phases of the Filipino Diaspora

After discussing the typologies of diaspora nationalism and how they are promoted in Japan, the various case studies showing the primacy of demotic nationalism among Filipino groups, and how the discourses that are directed towards the diaspora are being understood and negotiated, this chapter shows that the changing character of the Filipino diaspora in Japan has undergone several phases of redemption. These trends show that these changes largely affect the reimagining of the Global Filipino nation. As the Filipino diaspora in Japan shifted from predominantly entertainers and undocumented workers, towards the growth of *Nikkeijins* and *Zainichi* and finally into the latest trends focusing on the emergence of care workers and ALTs, the previous sections have shown that although there has been massive changes, the same basic themes still remain: their desire to be integrated into Japanese society while at the same time still maintain ties to the homeland. As they go about this process, they constantly reimagine the Filipino nation. However with the primacy of the demotic dimension, this reimagining also depends on the social actor involved.

**Table 5.5. Diverging views by Actors**

| Theme | Pessimist (Chua) | Transnationalist (Tigno) | Optimist (Santiago) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Assimilation | -Filipinos are not yet assimilated<br>-May have semblance of assimilation but not genuinely accepted<br>-Assumption by host society that migrants should adjust to Japanese society and "should know their place" | -Filipinos are already assimilated | -Filipinos are already assimilated<br>-Already "Japanese" since they rarely interact with the larger Filipino diaspora in Japan and the homeland |
| Imagined Nation | -Ghetto: The Filipino nation is within Japan, since Filipinos are not accepted in the larger Japanese society | -Diaspora have their own "imagined nation" within their host communities in Japan | -The Filipino nation is located only in the homeland |

Source: Prepared by the author.

### 5.5.2. Actor-Based Reimagining

As shown in the figure above, the demotic dimension is clearly seen when the reimagining of the Filipino nation and how they place themselves within Japanese society depends on the social actor involved.

For the pessimists, they believe that Filipinos can't be truly integrated into Japanese society. Even though Filipinos can act Japanese and at times "be more Japanese than Japanese women" such as in the case of the *Zainichi*, the gap to be filled and the inherently closed-society prevents Filipinos to be truly Japanese in the eyes of their adopted host society. As such, this has led to the ghettoization of Filipinos wherein they form enclaves among themselves, and in consequence, the Philippines exist in their adopted communities in Japan.

The optimists meanwhile believe that the Filipino community in Japan hardly looks toward the homeland since they already are "Japanized" and have settled in Japan. Although they manifest trappings of Filipino culture during occasional cultural activities and events, the Filipino community hardly maintains ties to the homeland, except through personal and online communications to their families in the Philippines. Following their logic, the Philippines does not exist in Japan, it is merely a land far away that represents their nostalgia but far in away is disjointed in their everyday live in Japan.

While these views represent the opposite sides of the spectrum, for some groups, the Filipino nation lies in a transnational space, in which the Filipino nation is seen as a deterritorialized, and existing in the Filipino communities in Japan, but at the same time, also see themselves as genuine and integrated members of Japanese society. This includes the positive engagement that Filipino communities experience in the Kyoto (Tigno 2008) and Sakai district of Nagoya (Takahata 2012b, 2007). On the other hand, even for those seeing the presence of the nation, some groups also experience a sense of detachment- of being neither here nor there. This is exemplified by the experiences of the Nikkeijin (Ohno 2008) and JFCs, in which they have self-identities of being Japanese while in the Philippines, while after finally reaching Japan, discovering that they are not seen as Japanese. This also leads to the shuffling back and forth of these groups,

mirroring the phenomenon that Basch and other anthropologist refer to as transnationality (Basch etal 1994).

After showing how the views and existence of the Filipino nation largely depends on the social actor and social context that the diaspora experiences, we have to look closer and analyze how these contradictions can be reconciled. This will be discussed in the next section.

### 5.5.3. Demotic Reimagining of the Philippine Nation

As discussed in the previous section, the conception and reimagining of the Filipino nation depends on the social actor and their social context. If this demotic interpretation of the nation is prevalent, how can we reconcile the contradictory views of migrants regarding the location and existence of the Filipino nation? This chapter argues that the opposing views of the migrants are not problematic, since this can be reconciled if we consider the existence of the nation not limited to a geographic territory and a formal government or state, but rather can exist through the shared identities and views of a people.

In closer analysis, this chapter shows that for the Filipino diaspora in Japan, the Philippines is neither merely the state, nor is it limited to the idealized concept of the "nation", which is promoted by official and alternative nationalist discourses.[140] Rather for the migrants, the Philippines exist within and through collective existence of the Filipino diaspora communities in Japan. Furthermore, the basis of the reimagined nation is based on shared lived experiences as migrant workers, which gives primacy to the Filipino identity and Filipinoness.[141]

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[140] The divergence between the discourses of "Filipinoness" as promoted by the state and advocacy groups towards the migrants and how migrants themselves understand their Filipinoness represents the classic clash between auto-stereotypes and hetero-stereotypes. In this case, hetero-stereotypes refer to how others, such as the state and advocacy groups, think of what migrants are and ought to be; while auto-stereotypes refer to how people (the migrants) themselves think of who they really are.

[141] While it can be said that Filipinos have no real sense of what the nation is or have various ideas on where the nation exists, this study argues that this is not problematic. In fact, it only shows that views on the nation and national identity all depends on the actor involved. The Filipino in Japan has agency in how they interpret their nationalism, and as such, highlights the demotic dimension of their diaspora nationalism. Furthermore, while some might argue that the Filipino diaspora in Japan might lack a sense of what it means to be Filipino, whether

This can be articulated when migrants see themselves as being Filipino, not because they are living in Philippine soil, nor because they possess Philippine passports, nor have families back home in the islands. Rather, they see themselves as Filipinos since they share the same lived experience of being migrants in Japan, which as a group, attempts to go beyond the negative narratives of the *Japayuki* discourse in the larger Japanese society that still has a long way to go toward achieving substantive integration and genuine multiculturalism.

### 5.6. Summary

In summary, this chapter shows the contending nature of the diaspora nationalisms as directed toward the Filipino diaspora in Japan. Other than showing the dynamics and contentions of these diverging nationalisms, this chapter has clearly shown the primacy of demotic nationalism, which is exhibited by how migrants interpret and negotiate official and alternative discourses on their own terms. This clearly shows the pragmatic and demotic dimension of their nationalism. Furthermore, this chapter also argues that in light of the contending nationalism directed towards them; the Filipino community in Japan has begun to reimagine the Filipino nation itself. This chapter has shown that this reimagining has a strong demotic dimension. Indeed, the reimaging of the nation also depends on the actor and their specific perspective. More importantly, this reimagining highlights how the reimagined Global Filipino nation is based on the Filipino identity and shared lived experiences, rather than a concrete and orthodox conception of the nation state that is bound by national borders, formal nationality and citizenship statuses.

While the previous chapters highlight the primacy of demotic nationalism and the reimagining of the Filipino nation among the diaspora communities in Hong Kong and Japan, the next chapter will focus on the home communities in the homeland. In

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based on the perspectives of official or alternative nationalism, this thesis shows that in fact, migrants have a clear understanding of what being Filipino in Japan means. While their basis of Filipinoness is not based on the pronouncements and ideals of official and alternative nationalism, the basis of Filipinoness among migrants is based on their shared lived experiences and common identities, even as these identities also differ depending on the social grouping and status of the migrant.

particular, the next chapter will focus on the dynamics of diaspora nationalism as it relates to the debates on migration and development. By showing the literature gaps on studies on the initiatives of the state and advocacy groups on the migration and development nexus, this chapter will how migrants themselves have very pragmatic views on the impact of their migrant journey's towards their families and home communities, highlighting the primacy of pragmatic views and focus on maximizing positive outcomes, rather than the macro-national and meta-narrative debates on migration and development between the state and advocacy groups.

## Chapter Six
## Reimagining the Filipino Nation through the Migration-Development Nexus: Home Communities as Sites of Diaspora Nationalisms

After discussing the dynamics of the contending diaspora nationalisms and the primacy of demotic nationalism in diaspora communities in Hong Kong and Japan, this chapter will focus on how these diaspora communities abroad interact and maintain ties to their home communities in the homeland. In particular, this chapter will discuss the impact of migration and development initiatives by the state, advocacy groups and diaspora communities towards their home communities in the Philippines. By showing the literature gaps on studies on the initiatives of the state and advocacy groups on the migration and development nexus, this chapter will how migrants themselves have very pragmatic views on the impact of their migrant journey's towards their families and home communities, highlighting the primacy of pragmatic views and focus on maximizing positive outcomes, rather than the macro-national and meta-narrative debates on migration and development between the state and advocacy groups.

As shown in the previous chapters, the diaspora experience in East Asia highlight the normative character of migration, which is often the basis of theoretical, policy, and diaspora nationalism debates on the Philippine migrant experience. This is frequently framed through questions such as "How can the Filipino diaspora help the country?" As these normative themes are dominant in issues related to Filipino migration, various social actors such as migrant receiving states, international organizations and the international community at large also debate on the same question. Castles explains that recent years have seen the international community asking the question "How do we maximize the outcomes of migration toward development?" While this is the current dominant school of thought in migrant policy circles across the globe, Castles explains that this should be understood in the larger context of international development initiatives and migration control. He posits that the underlying logic is the belief that if the sending country's economy is developed, then unwarranted migration pressures toward the receiving countries will decrease by addressing the root push factors of poverty, unemployment and economic stagnation (2009).

While most of the literature have discussed and analyzed the migration-development nexus through various socio-economic factors, capacity building and policy analysis, this chapter will focus instead on the diverging perspectives of the various diaspora nationalisms and analyzing the impact of this debate toward the reimagining of the Filipino nation. Indeed, this chapter will highlight how the debates on the migration-development nexus are one of the main battlegrounds among the various diaspora nationalisms.

Although there are many stakeholders in this phenomenon, special focus will be given toward how migrants exhibit agency among the Filipino diaspora in East Asia and how they themselves experience and view this phenomenon. The chapter will start by discussing the main concepts and the larger context of the migration-development nexus debate, highlighting its promises and criticisms. The next section will then look further into the contending sites of diaspora nationalism as expressed by the diverging views by various government agencies, advocacy groups, hometown associations and the migrants themselves. Afterwards, specific case studies will highlight how migrant home communities are becoming sites of diaspora nationalisms particularly by focusing on the various migrant initiatives, programs and activities related to migration and development. The chapter will conclude by analyzing the theoretical and substantive aspects of the migration-development debate. In doing so, the primacy of demotic nationalism and the reimagining of the Filipino nation will be discussed.

### 6.1. Context of the Migration-Development Debate

In discussing the dynamics and debates on migration and development, various concepts and terms have been introduced throughout the years. In discussing the set of literature that view migration as potentially being beneficial, Castles (2009) uses the term "migration and development mantra" which is based from Kapur's idea that remittances have become a "new development mantra" in which governments and officials believe that money sent home by migrants can be a recipe for local, regional and national development (Kapur 2003). This notion of a "new mantra" assumes that: a) migrant remittances can have a major impact on the economic development of countries of origin, b) migrants also transfer home skills and attitudes – known as 'social remittances' which support development, c) 'brain drain' is being replaced by

'brain circulation', which benefits both sending and receiving countries, d) temporary (or circular) labor migration can stimulate development, e) migrant diasporas can be a powerful force for development, through transfer of resources and ideas and f) economic development will reduce out-migration (Castles 2009: 457-458).

Other than the conceptualization of the migration-development mantra, Opiniano defines the economic transnational activities of Filipino migrants as "migrant transnational/diaspora philanthropy" – the process in which migrants or immigrants abroad allocate a certain portion of their remittances to fund development projects in the emigration country. As a result, migrants' transnational philanthropy builds transnational relations that link together origin and settlement societies (2005: 227). While scholars such as Opiniano point out to the positive effects of diaspora philanthropy toward home communities, other researches such as economic and policy oriented studies emphasize the measurable and quantifiable aspects of project outcomes, namely whether outcomes are directed towards either infrastructure projects or job creation (EUI 2008: 4). This distinction highlight the bias among developmental organizations and state agencies against projects that migrants perceive are beneficial to their communities, rather they focus on concrete measures that create new markets and employment opportunities for development.

While there are various terms and concepts that straddle within the larger field of migration and development, a large portion of existing literature focus on the normative debates on the migration-development nexus. While recognizing on migration and development nexus' limitations, some scholars focus mostly on the positive potential of diaspora philanthropy. For NGOs and advocacy groups that focus on collective remittances and funneling migrant donations for various development projects, they commonly de-emphasize long-term national development goals but rather focus on the positive impacts in the local community level (Opiniano 2005, Asis 2006, Alcid 2006). Financial and economic white papers meanwhile highlight the potential for development but point out the need for building open remittance windows, financial literacy geared towards migrants and access to micro-finance programs (ADB 2004). At the same time, they also highlight the necessity for organizational and capacity building among overseas migrant organizations, local

receiving home communities and local government units (EUI 2008). In discussing the role of local government units meanwhile, Asis suggests that promoting good governance is the missing link in building the migration and development in the Philippines (2011). Lastly, although activists have pointed out the limits of migrant remittances in promoting development and the negative aspects of materialism and remittance dependence, some scholars have shown the positive import of remittances beyond economic measures. Levitt mention that beyond monetary remittances, special focus should be given to social remittances that brings social values and technical skills in the home community (2001).[142] Lopez meanwhile argue that remittances have an important role in the development of social capital both at the household and community levels through the expansion of the community's social and personal services (2005).

In closer reading of this set of literature, a substantial portion of it discusses the limitations and problems associated with the migration-development nexus on different levels. Discussing the impact of remittances to migrant families and their home communities, Asis points out "although research findings show that overseas Filipino workers (OFW) families put remittances to good use, the impact of remittances beyond the family is less clear. Concerns include inequality between migrant and non-migrant families, apprehensions about materialism, conspicuous consumption, careless use of remittances, and families becoming dependent on remittances" (2006: 116-117).

Moving beyond simply stating the limits of the positive aspect of remittances, some scholars are critical of the role of migrant investment and micro-finance schemes toward low-wage migrant workers. Ibon International, a progressive leftist think tank, argues that although migration is doubtless effective in temporarily reducing poverty of particular households where remittances are received, there is little reason to believe

[142] Levitt coined the term social remittances to call to attention that in addition to money, migrants export ideas and behaviors back to their home communities (2001). Observing four types which includes-norms, practices, identities and social capital, Levitt argues that social remittances occur when migrants return to or visit their communities of origin and through the exchange of letters, videos, cassettes, email, blog, telephone calls. They can also be seen as being distinct from, but are often reinforced by other forms of global cultural circulation.

that it is able to make a dent on structural and systemic poverty in the Philippines.[143] Citing the limits of migrant remittances and its projected multiplier effects, they argue that:

> The limits of migration and remittances are little mitigated by efforts to leverage the contribution of remittances at the microeconomic and macroeconomic levels – i.e., improving migrant entrepreneurship, encouraging savings, pooling remittances for private and public investment projects, and so on. Indeed there are several factors negating the theoretically positive multiplier effects. There is not much capital left behind for reinvestment with remittances largely going first to household debt repayments then to basic subsidence consumption expenditures on food, rent, education and health care. The lack of meaningful investment prospects in the country means that the largest part of 'investment' by OFWs is in mainly small-scale service sector activities such as tricycles, jeepneys, taxis, street restaurants and sari-sari stores. These are minimally productive in a deeper macroeconomic sense, generate few jobs and result in minimal capital domestic capital formation (from website, Ibon 2011).

On a similar vein, Weekley points out that since low-wage migrant workers, such as foreign domestic workers, already have lower disposable incomes and have to balance their economic needs back home; it is improper for the state and some NGOs to ask them to cut down on their spending and use it for investment programs back home (2004). She argues that:

> It is troubling that progressive NGOs and as well as government and business call on migrant workers to reduce their spending and save their pennies for the nation instead, especially given the general admission that these schemes do not have much positive effect on the individual worker in her or his own lifetime nor can any larger economic development arising from them can be guaranteed. As others have observed in studies of credit schemes, it seems that migrant workers are being "disciplined" rather than liberated (Weekley 2004: 358).

After discussing the limitations of migrant remittances and investment programs, there are also scholars who discuss the role of the state policies and its pursuit of the myth of migration bringing economic development to the country. Reviewing the migration policies during the post-Marcos era, Tigno argues:

> In terms of welfare, investment and employment targets, labor export cannot possibly achieve genuine national development objectives or broad-based development. Decades of experience already attest to this. Migration policy as state policy rejects any notion of decentralization or distribution of wealth and social power. In the final analysis, the unfortunate prospect is that migration as a function of free market forces is but a myth just as migration as a vision for attaining national development is a false and dangerous panacea (1990: 78).

[143] Ibon International, is a Philippine-based progressive think tank that is closely linked with the National Democratic movement.

As these scholars discuss various aspects on the migration-development nexus debate, they are in agreement that although migration may be one of several strategies to promote development (i.e. employment generation), it cannot suffice as a major development strategy (Asis 2006: 118). Indeed they reiterate that while labor export and remittances can play a role as a supplementary source of income and foreign exchange, it is unfortunate that it has become the cornerstone of development strategy of the Philippine state (Ibon 2011, San Jose 2008).

While these scholars point out the problems and limitations of the migration-development debate, they ultimately suggest diverging strategies on how to best respond to these issues. Similar to what was mentioned in the previous chapter on Hong Kong, Weekley discuss the presence of two groups within the migrant advocacy movement in Hong Kong, pointing out that this division sheds to light the current debates among migrant workers organizations about strategies for best defending and extending workers' interests, including the economic reintegration programs (2004: 354). In his discussion on how various migrant advocacy groups followed diverging strategies and approaches regarding the migration-development debate, Rother highlight this divergence by using the case studies on how these groups interacted during the previous Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) conferences (2010, 2009a, 2009b).

The GFMD was established with its first meeting in Brussels, Belgium in July 2007 as an offshoot from a United Nations High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development with the aim of fostering dialogue between governments and civil society. From the first meeting in Brussels, to its 2nd meeting in Manila in October 2008 to its 3rd meeting in Athens in November 2009, various civil society organizations and coalitions have participated in both the official dialogues and parallel events. During this period, the government agencies could be labeled as being a part of "migration and development". Rother (2009a) explains that Civil society groups who are critical of these state policies could be further divided into those who lament on the state policies of pursuing "migration for development" but see possible avenues for cooperation (namely the RD cluster); and those who argue that the state follows a "migration instead of development" policy and are critical of the whole exercise of

GFMD and the migration-development nexus (namely the RA cluster). Indeed these typologies and diverging strategies pursued on the migration and development nexus will be highlighted in the case studies of this chapter.

Lastly, although various aspects of the migration-development nexus have been discussed by both state institutions and civil society, ranging from diaspora philanthropy, social remittances, brain circulation and skills transfer, to migrant investment schemes; Asis points out that the one program area in need of radical refinement and improvement relates to the reintegration of returning migrants (2006:114). Reintegration, together with the related concept of "failed migration" goes beyond simply working towards creating better reintegration programs and alternative jobs for returning migrants. These concepts are closely tied to both the dominant and demotic discourses that highlight the narrative of the *Bagong Bayani* or *Balikbayan* as finally coming home. This narrative, which is based on popular shared migrant experiences and dreams, portrays the migrant as striving hard to work abroad, provide for their families back home and then with their little savings, aim to start a "small-business" back home to either supplement their income or as a means for permanent reintegration. In her study of Filipino seafarers, Swift describe this phenomenon:

> It is understandable that the typical Filipino seafarer describes being at sea as a liminal hardship to be endured for a limited period in order to earn sufficient capital to establish a small business back home. This rationale aligns with the oft-hear description of Filipino labor migration as a 'sacrifice' upon which the Philippine government has developed a discourse of OFWs as 'national heroes' surviving challenges in order to remit money for the well-being of their family and nation (Swift 2011: 275-276).

This narrative is so well engrained to the Filipino migrant psyche that some view the ideal *Balikbayan* or *Bagong Bayani* as successfully coming home by making it big abroad and finally retiring at home and helping in various philanthropic activities. An interesting and unintentionally humorous book entitled "The True Balikbayan: Return to Native Land" exemplifies this dream. This self-published book was written by Ronaldo Velasco, a retired engineer who made it big in the U.S., as a testament to his successful return to the homeland and his righteous quest to spread the gospel and his success as a *balikbayan*. He defines a "true *balikbayan*" as: "one who returned to the Philippines with a mission in mind, and with a firm determination to accomplish that mission to help the poor people of this country. A true '*balikbayan*' is one who after

obtaining considerable success abroad would come back to share this blessings to the less fortunate" (2010: 10).

### 6.2. Contending Views within Diaspora Nationalisms

After setting the context and debates on the theme of migration and development, this section will highlight the divergence of strategies and dynamics between various key actors in the migration-development debate: namely that of the state and their various agencies, various civil society and migrant advocacy organizations, NGOs with migrant reintegration and investment projects, hometown associations (HTAs) and migrants themselves. Although the previous chapters already discuss the divergent strategies pursued by the various groups within the diaspora nationalisms, this section will use several ideal types, which are sometimes difficult to categorize since some of the groups show commonalities in their approaches and positions. This is especially true to the RD cluster of civil society groups, which was discussed in chapter four of this dissertation, which focused on the Filipino diaspora in Hong Kong, wherein they are not necessarily pro-government and is critical on several state policies. However they nevertheless are amendable to working within the migration-development nexus framework.

#### 6.2.1. Official Nationalism

As part of its drive to promote its migration policies, the Philippine state has used several migrant discourses to reach out towards the Filipino diaspora. Over the past years, several terms have been suggested, from that of the *balikbayan* and the overseas contractual worker (OCW) during the Marcos period, toward the overseas Filipino worker (OFW) and the *bagong bayani* of the Aquino administration, and the Global Filipino during the Arroyo period (San Jose 2008). Reaching out to the diaspora, the state has constantly appealed towards their love of country and asked to help in building the homeland, whether through philanthropic contributions through its government agencies or through appeal for investments. This was exemplified when the newly sworn in President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo introduced the term "Overseas Filipino Investors" (OFI) in her state of the nation address, encouraging migrants to invest their earnings on developmental projects in their communities or in entrepreneurial ventures (Rodriguez 2010: 88).

Within the state migration bureaucracy, several agencies handle issues related to the migration-development nexus. For migrant investments and philanthropic activities directed towards permanent migrants, the Commission on Filipino Overseas (CFO) was established in 1980. Together with its orientation and educational programs to prepare departing emigrants, it is well known for its various programs that promote closer ties between emigrants and the Philippines, namely through its LINKAPIL Program (*Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* – Service to Fellow Filipinos) which was developed in 1989 to match the donations of Filipinos with the needs of communities in the Philippines (LINKAPIL 2011). For tasks pertaining to the welfare of OFWs and their families left behind by migrants, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) was established in 1977. Although the OWWA used to be the focal agency for reintegration programs, the recent years have seen the need for a more specific agency that could handle the reintegration programs in light of Lehman financial crises of 2008 that led to the return of migrant workers, particularly those employed in the manufacturing sector in Taiwan. Thus the National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO) was established in 2007 in order to offer various services, from OFW counseling to capacity enhancement seminars to micro-finance/entrepreneurship opportunities (NRCO 2011). Also in partnership with the NRCO are semi-government and private banks, such as the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), Land Bank of the Philippines (Landbank) and the Philippine National Bank (PNB), who offer micro-finance opportunities and promote savings and remittance schemes specifically targeting migrants and their families. Lastly, the Philippine state has also promoted its programs on migration and development through its active participation and hosting of the 2nd GFMD in Manila from October 27-20, 2008 and in many regards was an ideal environment for discussing the wide array of challenges, opportunities, development issues and policy implications associated with migration, considering its position as a major labor-exporting country and its strong migrant civil society movements (Rother 2009a: 96).

Although not directly part of the state's policies, this chapter will also discuss the role of elite-led nationalism regarding migration and development, particularly by citing the case of *Gawad Kalinga,* a middle-class Christian urban renewal movement that has found resonance and support not merely with the Philippine elite and middle-class,

but also migrants abroad as well. This case study will be discussed in the context of how their programs espouses middle class sensibilities, not merely to its donors but to its beneficiaries which are required to participate in its values-formation activities.

### 6.2.2. Alternative Nationalism

As mentioned in the previous chapters, one of the main defining features of the alternative nationalist migrant advocates has been their critical position on the state's policies regarding the migration-development nexus. Arguing that the state is pursuing "migration instead of development" (Rother 2009a: 96), they not only believe that the state should not use migration as the primary means for development, they also posit that pursuing migration-development programs are "band-aid" solutions that veer away from working for the true need of migrants workers and by pursuing "migration instead of development", rationalizes the policy of the Philippine state of migrant export. Furthermore, other than criticizing the state for its policies that has led to its dependence on migration, these migrant advocates are angered on how the state has reached out towards the diaspora and used their contributions to prop up the state on the pretext of working for economic development.

While both clusters share common views that recognize the dependency of the state with its labor migrant remittances and its failure to pursue long-term development to address the push factors of unemployment and poverty, their level of engagement within the framework of the migration-development nexus varies.

Discussing the limits of remittances and the negation of theoretically positive multiplier effects in the community, adherents within the revolutionary approach (RA) cluster argue that "the lack of meaningful investment prospects in the country means that the largest part of 'investment' by OFWs is in the mainly small-scale service sector activities such as tricycles, jeepneys, taxis, street restaurants and sari-sari stores. These are minimally productive in a deeper macroeconomic sense, generate few jobs and result in minimal domestic capital formation" (from website, Ibon 2011). Their stance is summarized as:

> Their aim is to wage a struggle – via means different from those of groups such as the AMC – for development of a national economy that would offer its citizens employment sufficiently remunerated that they will not be forced to work

> elsewhere, away from their families and often vulnerable to legal and physical abuses. They are critical of intermediate level strategies like that of the MSAI scheme (the reintegration/investment program of the AMC), which it considers "band-aid" and potentially dangerous for the longer-term goal (Weekley 2004:360).

Although critical of the state's policies on migration and development, the other cluster of civil society organizations see positive opportunities within the migration-development nexus framework. As discussed in the previous chapter, the radical democratic (RD) cluster are made up of several organizations, such as the Hong Kong-based Asian Migrant Centre (AMC), the Asian regional based Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), and the Philippine-based Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA) and *Unlad Kabayan*. Although they themselves point out for the need for regional laws to protect migrant workers and are critical of the migrant policies pursued by the Philippine state, they nevertheless view the possibilities and potential of migration-development programs for equitable migrant investments and possible reintegration schemes (Rother 2009a: 105). This reflects the general strategy and approach employed by the RD cluster, which is to be critical of state policies on migration but at the same time, take advantage of opportunities for progressive policies and cooperation with state agencies on programs that fit their advocacy concerns.

### 6.2.3. Demotic Nationalism

While the state and different civil society groups have different views and strategies regarding the migration and development debate, we also have to consider the micro-level aspects, particularly on how migrants themselves view this debate. Similar to Castles' approach that emphasizes the social transformation process, believing that migrating in search of better opportunities and greater human security is a way in which people can exercise agency to improve their livelihoods (2009: 441), this section will highlight how migrants exhibit agency by deciding for themselves the most pragmatic actions on these development issues and shows that they are not merely passive recipients within the larger debate of the migration-development nexus.

Although various groups and migrants themselves have diverging views, scholars point out that that migrants generally love their country but are skeptical of the government. Aguilar mentions that for migrants, "the distrust of Philippine political

institutions is most palpable. Although most overseas Filipinos maintain social ties across time and space, theirs is largely a familial transnationalism, even an ethnic and national one that takes pride in being Filipino, but it is also decidedly anti-Philippine state" (2007, 156-157).[144] As such while the government and migrant civil society reaches out towards them, they are often time wary or critical of large-scale nationalist projects but are keener toward smaller scale philanthropic or small-scale investment opportunities. This is not to say that they don't participate in projects spearheaded by various state agencies. As the succeeding case studies will show, a substantial number of permanent Filipino migrants based in the US and Canada regularly participate in the Linkapil program of the CFO while at the same time, several NGOs are making headway in their interactions with similar migrant organizations and HTAs from the US. This only shows that Filipino migrants love their *bayan* (nation or town) but not necessarily the *bansa* (country or state).

Another aspect worth considering is the pragmatic views of migrants regarding remittances. Although scholars have rightly pointed out problems related to remittance dependence, materialism, inequality within the community and the limits of remittances in bringing genuine community development (Ibon 2011, Asis 2006), migrants often have more pragmatic and non-normative views regarding remittances. Recognizing that while past literature and critics have pointed out limitations and problems associated with remittances, Lopez argues that migrants highlight the positive effects of remittances within migrant home communities, particularly in building social capital and social embeddedness (2005).

Further discussion related to demotic nationalism is the issue of failed migration. As shown in the previous chapters, demotic nationalism is shaped by common migrant experiences and as such, for migrants the normative debates on migration and development lies not on macro-level or national level debates promoted by the official

[144] While a person being viewed as both nationalistic and "anti-state" may seem as a misnomer, this is well accepted and understood by Filipinos. To understand this seemingly paradoxical assertion, we have to consider that other than the anti-colonial basis of Philippine nationalism, another basis of nationalism that emerged was the anti-dictatorial character that emerged during the Marcos regime (Hedman and Sidel 2000). As such, civil society organizations and in particular, migrant Filipinos is often seen as distrustful of the state, and still nationalistic.

or alternative nationalisms, but rather their main concern is the shame of failed migration outcomes. This is related to the often-fatalistic belief of migrant Filipinos as expressed through the concepts of the *panalo* and *talo* (winner and loser) (Aguilar 2002). For the common migrant worker, the institutionalization of the state migrant apparatus and the presence of the culture of migration (Asis 2006:108) have duly informed the migrant on the positive and negative aspects of the Filipino migrant experience. This together with the discourses of the *Bagong Bayani* socializes the migrant in believing that although migrant work is tough and difficult, it is only through hard work, sacrifice and a bit of luck, that one could come home and be a *panalo*, an good provider for his family and an esteemed member of his home community. It is also precisely this reason that migrants and their families become dependent on migrant work – although the migrant worker has already dedicated most of this working life abroad and has provided for his family and have invested on their children's education, the social pressure of returning without savings, or with outstanding debts or in not being able to maintain the higher standard of living is too much to bear for migrants. As such, they might prefer to work for longer hours or risk irregular status in a foreign land rather than to come home and be seen as *talo*, a failure. This is exemplified by contractual migrants who have been part of the early cohorts of workers who left during the Marcos period. After working several decades abroad and having supported their children and extended families, they might not opt to come home since their children, facing limited work opportunities back home, and their grandchildren still need financial support. This was poignantly expressed in Rey Ventura's book "Into the Country of Standing Men" in which he revisits Kotobuki, Yokohama where he once worked as an undocumented migrant worker during the height of the Japanese bubble economy. After several decades, he meets his companions who is considered as *panalo*, has provided for his family throughout the years, and is now pursuing the American dream, after being petitioned by his daughter, a registered migrant nurse in the US. On the other hand, he mentions the case of Gabriel, another friend who continues to be a migrant worker and that due to the harsher economic life in Japan, he is forced to live in a "blue mansion", as a squatter and homeless person eking out his living simply to send remittances back home and avoid the shame of returning as a failed migrant or *talo* (Ventura 2007).[145]

[145] A blue mansion refers to the blue plastic sheets used by homeless persons in Japan for their

Another similar story was shared to me during a fieldwork visit to an HTA meeting in Hong Kong. Interviewing Rima Cunanang, the head of the United Pangasinan Hong Kong (UPHK), she recalls her migrant experience on how she has been a domestic helper for more than 20 years and still cannot retire due to the dependence of her family back home. Where before it was her children who needed her financial support, this time she is also providing for her in-laws and grandchildren as well. She rationalizes her continued work in Hong Kong by highlighting how much her family needs her, while at the same time sharing the stories of how much she was able to help in her home communities through various philanthropic endeavors which she and her HTA members organized. This included various fund-raising activities among Filipinos in Hong Kong through prize raffles, cultural shows, pageants, and disaster-relief drives. She then mentions how they were able to help less fortunate households during Christmas, help during natural calamities and even help for renovations in local town infrastructures, such as roads, schools and the church.[146]

### 6.3. Diverging Approaches on Migration and Development

After discussing the positions of the various diaspora nationalism groups, this section will discuss seven case studies, two from official-elite nationalism approach, and three from the alternative nationalism; to highlight the diverging approaches, outcomes and debates and issues related to the migration-development nexus.

#### 6.3.1. Official Nationalism

##### 6.3.1.1. State Institutions

Initially the government didn't have a reintegration program for migrants, it was lumped together with other welfare services offered by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), such as the repatriation of OFWs from trouble torn host countries and support services and consultations at the various embassies and consulates abroad. However as the pioneering generation of contractual migrant Filipinos during the 1970's have begun to age and the social issues attached to migration outcomes and reintegration have surfaced, the state through OWWA made

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squatter houses.

[146]Interview with Cunanang 2009.

feasibility studies for livelihood projects for returning migrants in 1987, and launched several programs, such as the "Expanded Livelihood Development Program (ELDP)" and "Social Integration Program". In her study exploring the reintegration programs of the government, Ochi describe these programs as initially generating employment for about 3,600 workers, but was suspended due to low repayment rates (around 40%) of these micro-finance loans in 1995. In 1996, this program was repackaged and offered loans with increased ceilings and also entrepreneurial training. Although it funded 430 enterprises with 732 beneficiaries in total, these government initiated reintegration efforts have been criticized due to the lack of information dissemination toward returning migrants, and given the magnitude of returning migrants, the overall scale of the program coverage is disproportionately small (Ochi 2005).[147]

**A. National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO)**

Proving that this was not enough, the state then established the National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO) in March 2007 as an attached agency under the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), designed to be a One-Stop-Center of reintegration for OFWs and their families. During my fieldwork, I was able to interview Atty. Teresita Manzala, head of the NRCO, the agency initially had limited manpower and resources but with the Lehman financial shock of 2008 bringing thousands of OFWs returning from their manufacturing jobs in Taiwan and South Korea, the Arroyo government provided further resources to expand their mandate and services offered.[148] She explains specific services offered by the NRCO which includes: advocacy on the importance of preparing for reintegration, referral for psychosocial counseling, job search assistance for local and overseas employment, business counseling, advisory, mentoring and networking services, linkages with banks and other financial institutions for investment opportunities, training, retooling and skills upgrading courses, immediate relief or bridging mechanism that allows them to earn decent income upon return to the Philippines, services or assistance in acquiring productive resources to start a business such as raw materials, equipment, tools and jigs (NRCO 2011).

[147] In 2004, the OWWA has also been criticized of disbursing its OFW welfare funds to support a classroom building project called the *Classroom Galing sa Mamamayang Pilipino sa Abroad* (CGMA) (classrooms from Filipinos abroad), which the *Migrante* party list fear was used for President Arroyo's reelection campaign (Bulatlat 2004).

[148] Interview with Manzala 2009.

Although it wasn't specifically mentioned during the interview, it seems that the mentioned programs although promising, are arguably temporary stop gap measures for migrants as they wait for their re-deployment to other possible labor migration destinations. Indeed some scholars argue that the creation of agencies such as the NRCO signals that reintegration initiatives are being taken not as a result of coherent government policy, but rather as ad hoc responses to political pressures (Weekley 2004: 359).

Although the various state agencies offer specific services for specific needs of the Filipino diaspora, the common thread that is discernible is the state's admission that it doesn't have enough resources to create sustainable reintegration for the migrants and that full reintegration and independence from migrant work is at best a long-term goal. As such, these institutions appeal toward harnessing the support of concerned social partners and organizations for OFW reintegration and above all developing the full potential of migrants' earnings. A NRCO report concludes that:

> All these issues, however, could be partly resolved by developing the full potential of migrants' earnings. If only OFWs and their families could learn to use remittances for more productive undertakings, it would be easier for them to bask happily in the glow of the family, community and economic reintegration. It is for this reason that the Philippine government and other sectors should strive harder to encourage overseas Filipinos to convert their earning into producing resources (NRCO 2009).

Although these state agencies have a valid point on the need for migrants to use remittances for more productive undertakings, a closer reading of these statements seems to shift the responsibility and burden of "economic development" toward the migrant. This trend of shifting the burden to the migrant has been going on since the migrant policies during Ramos period, which can be described as a period of deregulation.[149]

**B. Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO)**

Other than its reintegration and welfare programs, one of the major facets of the state's migration and development agenda relates to how it reaches out towards its migrants for philanthropic and developmental purposes. Established on June 16, 1980

[149] While the state promises to give protection to migrants, it has the caveat that since migrants are already well-informed of the risks and realities of migrant life abroad, then they should make the informed choice to do so even before they leave. For a more detailed discussion of this, see San Jose 2008 and Ball and Piper 2002.

through *Batas Pambansa* 79 (National Law no. 79), the Commission on Filipinos Overseas is an agency tasked to promote and uphold the interests of Filipino emigrants and permanent residents abroad, and preserve and strengthen ties with Filipino communities overseas (CFO 2011). Initially tasked with registering and providing pre-departure orientation seminars to emigrants, the agency's functions and mandate expanded toward preventing human trafficking, promoting financial contributions from overseas to development activities in underserved communities all over the Philippines and providing younger generations of Filipinos overseas with opportunities to learn Philippine history, culture, institutions and the Filipino language (CFO 2011).[150]

**Table 6.1. Top Five Destinations of Filipino Permanent Migrants**

| | |
|---|---|
| USA | 2,592,632 |
| Canada | 553,793 |
| Australia | 285,977 |
| Japan | 146,488 |
| Italy | 29,736 |
| World Total | 4,056,940 |

Source: 2009 data from CFO website (CFO 2011).

In order to promote development and philanthropic activities, the *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (Link for Development Program or Linkapil) was established in 1989. Seeking to establish broader and deeper partnership between Filipinos overseas and those in the home country, it provides means for the transfer of various forms of resources from Filipinos overseas to support small-scale, high-impact projects to address the country's social and economic development needs. Some of the projects include: classroom construction or renovation, medical and dental missions and donations for disaster-affected areas.

Based from my interview with Edison Tondares, coordinator of the Linkapil program, he explained that one of the advantages the Linkapil program has over other philanthropic programs, particularly by the initiatives of civil society groups and the

[150] The issue of human trafficking was brought about by the growing incidence of mail-order brides during the 1980s and 1990s in which prospective wives were brought to parts of Europe and Australia to marry husbands. This brought with it various social issues and criticisms of human trafficking and gender inequality. As such, one of the CFO's mandate is to provide pre-marriage counseling for Filipino and foreign spouses which is required before they could get the needed marriage visas and documents.

private sector, is the ease in which the goals of migrant groups and HTAs are easily coordinated with the needs of local communities in the Philippines. Through its operational framework, a clear cut, transparent and well-coordinated program is offered. This contrasts with the experience of migrant group initiated projects, in which they need to pass through various bureaucracies such as customs, and then contact local government units, such as a town or city mayor's office, for permission to go about their philanthropic activities. Research and interviews of HTAs from Hong Kong have shown that such approaches are prone to bureaucratic red tape, corruption, influence peddling and even "state-capture".[151] This is one of bright points of the Linkapil program, and as such they have had a good reputation with various migrant organizations and Tondares takes pride that their track record speaks for itself.[152]

Figure 6.2. shows the steps that an overseas Filipino organization would go through to course their philanthropic donations to their beneficiaries in the Philippines. If a migrant organization does not course its donations through the Linkapil program, they have to go through multiple steps: first, to contact the local embassy in the host country, which will then coordinate with the CFO in the Philippines. Then they have to contact the relevant government bureaucracy (e.g. Department of Education (DepEd) for book donations, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in the case of donated toys for orphanages, etc.), which will then vouch for them when they discuss issues of taxation at the Department of Finance and Bureau of Customs. Finally, they will then have to coordinate with the local government officials before they even reach their intended beneficiaries.

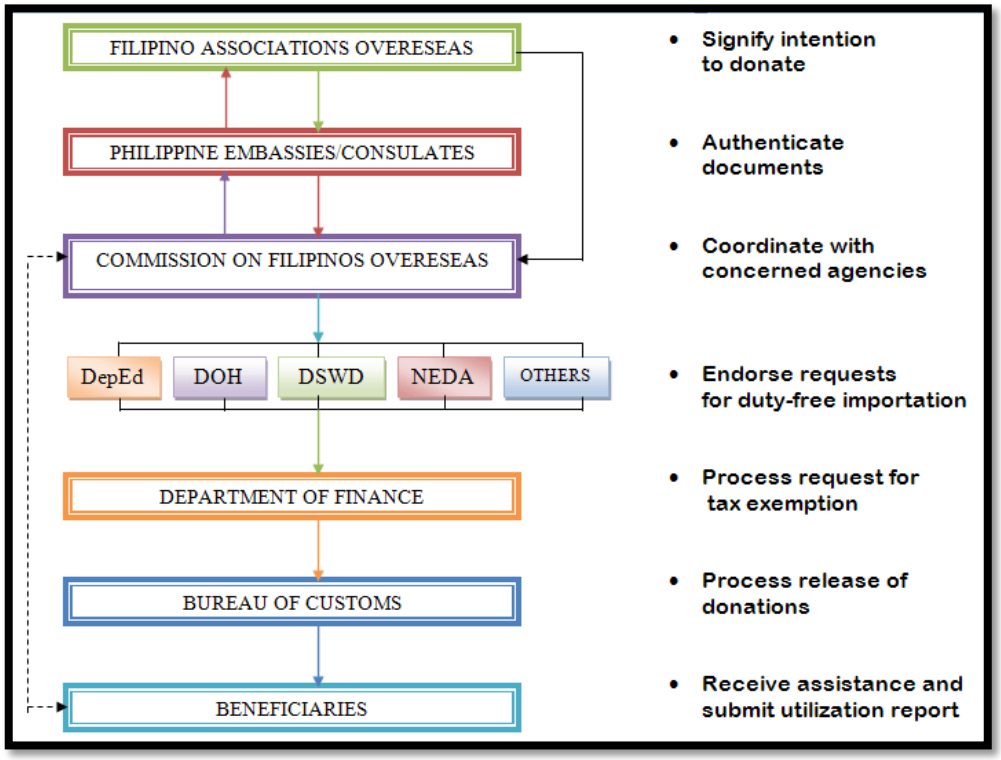
In contrast to this process, donations coursed through the Linkapil program only takes three steps – with the CFO acting as the sole middleman between the migrant association and the beneficiaries. Since every step is coursed and vouched by the CFO, it addresses concerns on bureaucratic red tape and corruption, especially on matters

[151] Interviews with the Mission for Migrant Workers (MFMW) and the *Abra Tingulan Ilocano Society* (ATIS), an HTA in Hong Kong, shared their experience wherein their migrant initiated projects, a migrant cooperative and a one-stop migrant information center, were eventually controlled by the local politician and interest groups, and in the case of the ATIS project, the politician took credit for the project during his election campaign although he was never an active member of the project. Interview with Abdon-Tellez 2009 and ATIS 2009.

[152] Interview with Tondares 2009.

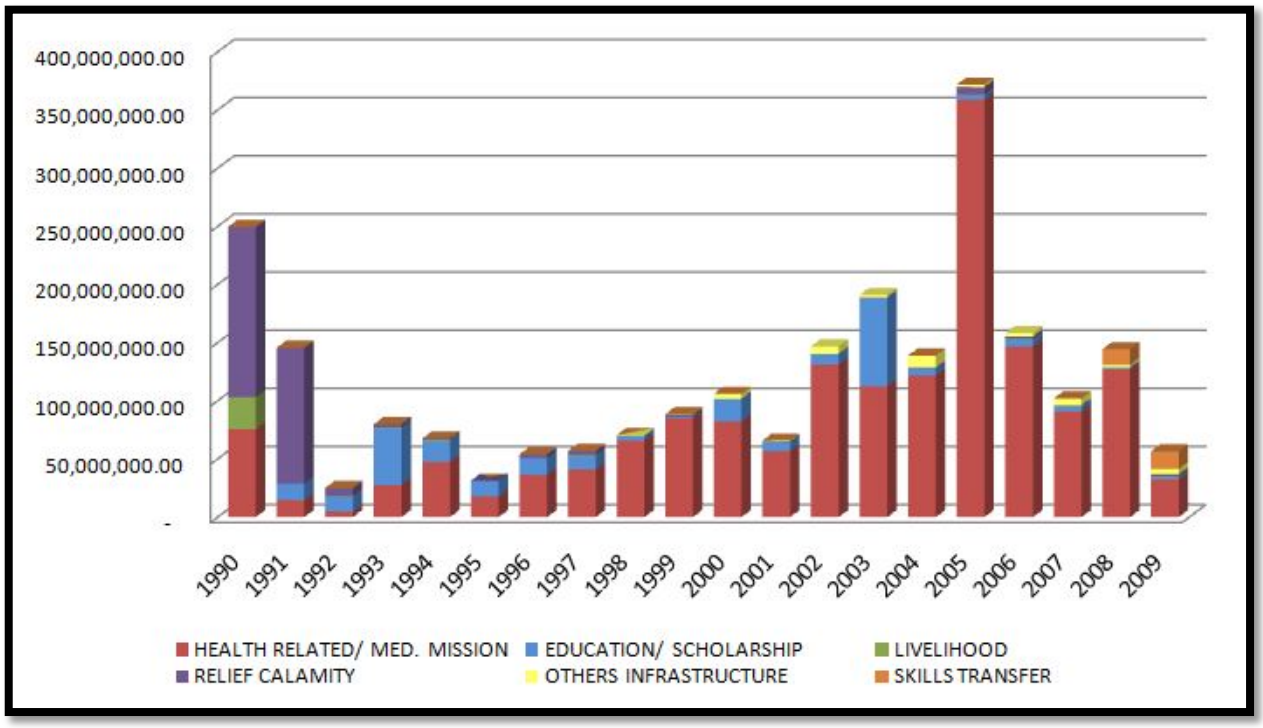
related to customs and taxes. Figure 6.3. meanwhile shows the rise of donations coursed through the CFO. It is worth to note that most of the donations are health related, wherein HTAs often organize medical missions that provide much needed medical services to various beneficiary hometowns in the Philippines. Other popular philanthropic programs include disaster relief donations and education/scholarship programs.

**Figure 6.1. Linkapil Operational Framework**




Note: DepEd – Department of Education, DOH – Department of Health, DSWD – Department of Social Welfare and Development, NEDA – National Economic and Development Authority
Source: CFO Website, Linkapil 2011.

**Figure 6.2. Donations in Pesos coursed through the Linkapil program**




Source: CFO Website, Linkapil 2011.

### 6.3.1.2. Civil Society groups (Non-Alternative Nationalism Cluster)

***Gawad Kalinga***

A good case study that highlights the role of Philippine elites and middle class in shaping diaspora nationalism within the framework the migration-development nexus is the case of *Gawad Kalinga* (GK). Established in 2003, *Gawad Kalinga* (give care) was originally a social responsibility project within the Couples for Christ (CFC), a Catholic family renewal movement. Departing from its spiritually-oriented founder organization, it became a successful provider of housing to the poor, particularly slum-dwellers in Manila but now increasingly expanding to other parts of the country, the Muslim south and even countries like Indonesia and Cambodia. Primarily building homes, community centers and classrooms achieved these urban renewal projects. Following corporate social responsibilities models pioneered by international NGOs such as Habitat for Humanity, Gawad Kalinga expanded its partnership beyond its CFC members toward the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs of various corporations, philanthropic foundations, and civic groups.

Other than reaching out towards big corporations and its base of middle class Filipinos, it has aggressively pressed the Filipino diaspora in the US, Canada and Singapore to support and sponsor projects in various GK communities. This has led to several mass media information campaigns and the creation of the annual GK Global Summit.[153] During my fieldwork to several GK communities in Paranaque, a suburb in Metro Manila, I was able to visit several project areas sponsored by the CFC chapters in Tokyo and Yokohama who is led by Consul General Confiado from the Philippine Embassy. Inspired by the activities of GK, the CFC sponsor group has pooled together their resources and organized several fund raising activities to create the *Sibol* (to grow) scholarship that provides the operational costs of several pre-school classrooms, the school needs of selected pre-school children and their teachers.[154]

In discussing the innovation behind *Gawad Kalinga's* success, Habaradas and Aquino point out to a) how GK views members of the poor communities not as passive actors, but rather as active participants in the development process; b) the institutional dimension of building relationships among the different actors as a "nation-building" movement and; c) its holistic approach to community development, which involves educational, health, livelihood and environmental programs (2010). They explain it as:

> Through the help of the caretaker team and the support provided by donors and volunteers, residents (or the *kapitbahayan*) become stewards of their own communities. Before programs are introduced to the target community, the caretaker team sets the stage for a continuing relationship with the community members by participating in the community's social activities, and by familiarizing themselves with the culture of the community. Even corporate partners and individual donors are oriented about *Gawad Kalinga* by bringing them to a GK site. Through their interaction with the members of the *kapitbahayan*, these benefactors become more involved in the various programs of GK in their adopted communities, and a more enduring relationship is formed (2010: 1).

Other measures of GK's success includes numerous awards it received in 2006, such as the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership, the first Haydee Yorac Award, the first Jose P. Laurel Award, the Manuel Luis Quezon Award, and the

[153] *Gawad Kalinga*'s success in integrating corporate social responsibility and diaspora philanthropy has led its social renewal model to be adopted in other countries, with several GK communities initiated in Cambodia and Indonesia. Furthermore, GK has entered talks with various state leaders in Asia and other international agencies, in exploring the potential to expand its urban development model to India and South Africa (Gawad Kalinga 2010).

[154] The annual cost of the Sibol scholarship is pegged at 24,000 yen (300 USD) per child, which covers the tuition fee, school uniforms, hygiene kit, field trip and teacher's salary.

Philippine Daily Inquirer's Filipino of the Year citation. Indeed Habaradas and Aquino argue that GK had become a true nation-building movement as evidenced by their interactions with local government units (LGUs), civic organizations, politicians, overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), academe, and even rival corporations (e.g. Globe and Smart, Jollibee and McDonalds, Unilever, Procter & Gamble, and Nestle) embraced GK's vision of a slum-free Philippines (2010: 22-23).

Although GK has a good track record and reputation, it has faced several criticisms, namely focused on its conservative moral values and its programs that integrate urban renewal and poverty reduction with Christian values formation as a pre-requisite for project areas and beneficiaries. Pinches (2010) explains that:

> *Gawad Kalinga*'s ability to attract middle class Filipino, both at home and abroad, through cleverly marketed appeal to Christian charity, an almost millenarian yet bureaucratically articulated, vision of nation building through slum eradication, and the tangible rewards it offers its donors and volunteers. It is at once radical in the goals it enunciates, yet deeply conservative in the social and moral relations of class it seeks to enact (305).

Also worth noting is that in spite of its explicit middle-class and conservative Christian value-led programs, its impact and track record has proven successful compared to the urban renewal projects by traditional politicians and other Philippine social movements. On her research studying the effects of community fragmentation and political diversity among the urban poor in Manila with programs organized by various social movements and politicians, Kiba explores the Baseco compound of Tondo, Manila and compares the approach initiated by GK in their community. Explaining that while different political groups, such as traditional politicians and activists from social movements, have always chosen their community as intervention sites these projects have always been problematic and were failures. As such, when GK first came to their community, they were suspicious of GK as being used only by the traditional politicians, due to the fact that the village got their previous funding from the Manila mayor's office in 2004. However as the years passed by, GK's urban renewal project in Baseco became successful and was accepted by the people, mainly due to their non-partisan character, which accepts contributions from any political parties, corporations and groups as long as it supports their urban renewal project (Kiba 2008). Furthermore, GK has had resounding success in capturing the imagination of the

Philippine diaspora and participation of various Filipino migrant groups and HTAs. This is evident as several GK communities are named after US, Canada and European-based Filipino HTAs.

Indeed, the success of GK compared with the programs initiated by the state and social movements through diaspora philanthropy, migration and development initiatives has implications toward the contending diaspora nationalisms which will be discussed in the concluding section of this chapter.

### 6.3.2. Alternative Nationalism Civil Society Organizations

#### 6.3.2.1. Experiences of the Revolutionary Approach (RA) Organizations

***Sigasig* Program of the MFMW**

One of the main organizations within the RA cluster of the alternative nationalism that criticizes the migration and development initiatives of the state is the Hong Kong-based Mission for Migrant Filipino Workers (MFMW). Although they are critical of the state's migration export policies and its expansion toward migration-development initiatives, the MFMW were initially agreeable to the concept of migrant reintegration and started a program called the "Sigasig Program" in 1988, which aimed to "provide links between the migrant workers and their families back home... to break the dependency of families [on the migrant worker's remittances and thereby to] break the inhuman dollar-connection" between them (Migrant Focus Magazine 2001: 9).

Similar to the projects espoused by the AMC of the RD cluster of Hong Kong migrants NGOs, the initial idea was to involve the migrant workers and their families in a cooperative from a chosen village site. Things went smoothly at first but then various disagreements surfaced, such as how much money should be saved, where it should be invested, and who will make the management decisions for the investment. While these were important concerns, the MFMW points out that the greatest problem was the unattainable expectation that such investment projects create among the migrants, is that they could go home sooner for good. MFMW points out that since everyone in the savings cooperative hopes that they will be the one to go home to manage the collectively owned business and since there can be only one or two who can go home,

problems began to surface within the rest of the members of the cooperative (Migrant Focus Magazine 2001: 9).

Due to these initial experiences, the MFMW and the other organizations within the AN-RA cluster concludes that such programs are temporary band-aid solutions. Criticizing the state and other NGOs schemes to teach financial literary to migrants, they also point out that it is nonsensical, since most foreign workers simply do not have anything other than meager savings after paying off the loans from overseas placement fees and sending money home to their families in the Philippines for daily expenses. This point was reiterated during an interview with Eman Villanueva, one of the officers of UNIFIL-HK when I asked him how they view the positions of the other cluster on the migration and development debate. Reflecting the main themes of diverging strategies as discussed in chapter four, Villanueva states that while their positions and ideologies might not always agree with each other, at least both the RA and RD cluster work together for the rights and welfare of Filipino migrants in Hong Kong. However if there was one aspect that he really takes issue is the stance of the AMC regarding migration and development, wherein they promote various schemes and initiatives in the name of migrant investment.[155] In closer analysis, this perspective reflects the main views of the RA cluster which views such investment programs as a means for the state (and the condoning NGOs who support it) to ultimately shift the burden of development and away from the state towards the migrants.

#### 6.3.2.2. Experiences of the Radical Democratic Perspective (RD) Organizations

Other than the main case studies of *Unlad Kabayan* and *Atikha*, most migrant NGOs already have reintegration and small-scale business initiatives directed towards migrants and their families back home. Describing how NGOs in the migrant sector changed throughout the years, Alcid mentions that by the 1990s, NGOs have shifted their activities from simply providing support services for migrants, towards national and regional level advocacy, and into programs that offer socio-economic alternatives to overseas employment (2006:344). Among these are small scale programs, such as livelihood projects for returning migrants (i.e. candle making, dressmaking, laundry services and retailing opportunities) initiated by the Japan-Filipino service and

[155] Interview with Villanueva 2009.

advocacy NGOs, such as BATIS-Aware and Development Action for Women Network (DAWN) (San Jose 2004). It was also during this period that more larger scale programs to promote reintegration through the maximizing of migrant investments for local communities were introduced. One such NGO was the Economic Resource Center for Overseas Filipinos Philippines Inc. (ERCOF), which was established to provide services to "assist primarily overseas Filipinos and anyone wishing to reside, do business or engage in some form of livelihood or enterprise in the Philippines" (ERCOF 2011). They do this primarily by pooling together migrant savings and investing or depositing in small rural banks and cooperatives in the Philippines to increase the capital flows in these communities.

With the new millennium ushering in interest in the productive utilization of remittances, the previous mentioned organizations and like-minded groups began to form several coalitions to share their information and organize forums that educate on the prospects of maximizing migration outcomes for development purposes. Such networks included the Philippine Council for Comprehensive Reintegration (PHILCORE) which was organized by the state agency OWWA and NGOs such as Unlad Kabayan and a more recent coalition called the Philippine Consortium on Migration and Development (PHILCOMDEV) which is composed on 36 NGOs, people's organizations, microfinance institutions, cooperatives who agree to converge their initiatives around issues of migration, human rights and development.

**A. *Unlad Kabayan***

While other NGOs have various economic reintegration programs within its scope of operations, *Unlad Kabayan* Migrant Services Inc. was founded in 1996 as the first NGO with economic reintegration as a core program.[156] *Unlad Kabayan* works within the framework of transforming overseas contract migration into an opportunity for place-based community economic development. As discussed in the previous chapter, Unlad Kabayan was originally conceived as the Migrant Savings for Alternative Investments for Community Development and Reintegration (MSAI for CDR) programme of the Hong Kong based NGO Asian Migrant Centre, *Unlad Kabayan* has

[156] From the Filipino/Tagalog words of *Unlad* which means development, and *Kabayan* which means countrymen.

partnered with AMC to help organize Filipino migrants to form savings groups and through various business and entrepreneurial training, were able to start various enterprises in various parts in the Philippines. Some of the enterprises established which they hope would replace the need for out migration and bring community development includes an organic chicken farm, agri-vet supplies, rice milling, coconut coir production and processing, and various food production such as noodles, *ube* (purple yam) powder and confectionary supplies (Gibson-Graham 2005: 7).

Although *Unlad Kabayan* introduced innovative programs, which aims to address migrant reintegration and community development and is well respected by like-minded NGOs and international organizations, it is not without its critics. As mentioned in the previous sections, Weekley points out to problems of sustainability and argue that such activities are "saving pennies for the state" and discipline rather than liberate the migrants (2004). The alternative nationalist networks and organizations meanwhile point to the problems of sustainability and how such initiatives veer away from the bigger socio-political issues of Philippine state.[157] Furthermore although Unlad Kabayan highlight its successes and potential, particularly in micro-finance programs, there is growing evidence, albeit anecdotally that it has been having financial and management problems with its major enterprise projects which has led to aggressive campaigning toward not only Filipino migrant organizations in the US and Europe, but also with more traditional fund giving agencies within the development community.[158] Indeed, this issue seems to suggest that the intensified media blitz that *Unlad Kabayan* organized in Australia, US and Europe was organized in order to appeal toward various diaspora communities to fund for its investment projects. However since its major projects were having problems of sustainability, one could argue that the migrant and emigrant "investors" are ultimately becoming NGO "donors" that sustain the NGO's programs rather than being genuine investors.

[157] When I asked indirectly to one of the project managers of Unlad Kabayan office in Quezon City, Manila, she skirted away from the sustainability issues but while she hinted on some problems, she highlighted how the trainings and small reintegration/micro-finance projects of Unlad Kabayan was doing well. Interview with Unlad Kabayan 2009.

[158] Interview with the Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL) Coordinator 2009.

**B. Atikha Overseas Workers and Communities Initiatives, Inc.**

Although a member of PHILCOMDEV, an interesting case study with an approach that differs from other migrant NGOs is the Atikha Overseas Workers and Communities Initiatives, Inc. Initiated in 1995 by a group of migrant returnees, advocates and religious leaders from Laguna, it was established after a research study on the impact of migration on women found that many migrants are not able to save enough money due to several factors in the workplace and the home community and as such, come home ill prepared to face the future. In its initial years, it has focused its work on addressing the social problems brought about by the separation of the OFW and their families by organizing communities of migrant families through psychosocial interventions. Focusing primarily on children of OFWs and women, Atikha believes that the social preparation of the families and the community is an important component for an effective reintegration program for migrant workers (Atikha 2011). Similar to other PHILCOMDEV NGOs, it also offers investment programs, but unlike Unlad Kabayan, they don't create investment programs directly, but rather offer investment opportunities to interested migrant groups and HTAs to their partner organization, the Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative (SIDC), which is a well-established and reputable agricultural cooperative and social enterprise. Other than its investment and financial initiatives, they actively reach out towards multiple stakeholders, particularly to local government units, state agencies, HTAs and other NGOs. This is culminated in their goal to create "one-stop migrant centers" in towns with sizable migrant populations. One such model is the ATIKHA migrant center at San Pablo, Laguna, where there are planned extension offices of government agencies that share relevant information, education campaigns and consultations to migrants. Also included are offices dedicated for educational workshops and activity centers for migrants and their families. Their center is a model of private sector, NGO and government cooperation as their building was an abandoned town hospital, which was donated by the local town. Atikha plans to lobby other communities to adopt their model, particularly in towns such as Mabini, Batangas where many migrant families hail from.[159]

[159] The towns of San Pablo, Laguna and Mabini, Batangas was chosen due to the high number of its OFWs. Mabini in particular is known as the having an "Italian village" wherein a part of the town have houses reflecting Italian architecture and building materials from their Italy based OFWs (New York Times 2010).

**Table 6.2. Registered OFWs in the National Capital Region (Manila) and Southern Tagalog Region (Region IV)**

| Region / Province | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| National | 220,684 | 122,875 | 343,559 |
| NCR | 58,344 | 21,816 | 80,160 |
| Region IV | 45,343 | 17,832 | 63,175 |
| Batangas | 10,689 | 5,254 | 15,943 |
| Cavite | 15,523 | 3,841 | 19,364 |
| Laguna | 9,107 | 4,221 | 13,328 |
| Quezon | 2,694 | 1,841 | 4,535 |
| Rizal | 7,330 | 2,675 | 10,005 |

Source: 2006 OWWA Data as cited from Tigno (2011:100).

One aspect that sets them apart is their emphasis on financial literacy and practical migration education. While other organizations also offer education and orientation services for migrants who have already left, Atikha's focus is on their families left behind and families with members who are planning to migrate. Executive Director Mai Dizon-Anonuevo explains that the common problems and social issues of migration are related to materialism, emotional burdens, and dependence on remittances which lead families to improve their lifestyle but grow dependent on the continued cyclical migration of the family member to maintain their often consumerist way of life. While other NGOs offer financial literacy, which are often focused on investment opportunities, Atikha's approach focus instead on life trajectories and family plans. During my fieldwork interview, Dizon explained to me the hypothetical case of an ideal financial literate migrant family - even before the father leaves for migrant work, he will discuss with his spouse and children on the purpose of his migration: is it for building a house, providing for the education of the children, saving enough capital to start a small business? After these goals are decided, they can then decide to allot specific savings and financial goals for the family, and through this action, agree to maintain their simple lifestyle, devote the remittances for savings so that one day, the father can come home (e.g. after three years) and not become dependent on cyclical remittances.[160]

Other pro-active educational projects of Atikha include the Atikha Children Savings Club, which was organized in August 2003 out of an exchange of ideas among children of OFWs. A child member explains that:

[160] Interview with Dizon-Anonuevo 2009.

> We realized that we could do a lot to show our appreciation for our parents' work and sacrifices. We now understand that we have to value our money. We used to be carefree, now we understand the value of discipline and saving money. We felt that we, members of the Batang Atikha Savers Club, are lucky because we have found the key to our success in the future (from website, Atikha 2011).

With over 500 members of the club and fourteen chapters already been established (eight in Batangas and six in Laguna), it socializes the children on the value of money and the hard work and sacrifice of their parents while working abroad. The Atikha Children Savings Club also goes hand in hand with its school-based program, which address the social costs of migration, by integrating a "migration issues course" in elementary and secondary schools through partnership with the Department of Education in Laguna. This program was created in October 2009 under a larger project called "Maximizing the Gains and Minimizing the Social Cost of Overseas Migration in the Philippines" which is funded by the European Council – United Nations Joint Migration and Development Initiative (EC-UN JMDI) Project. Dizon explains that:

> We have developed a teachers training manual "Children's Response to the Challenge of Migration: Teachers Training Manual on Migration Realities and Capacity Building for Children of Overseas Filipinos" which included various modules and also the reference materials that Atikha has developed through years of work abroad. Atikha also designed a 5-day teachers training program to teachers who will manage the program in schools with high concentration of children of overseas Filipinos. EC-UN JMDI provided assistance to conduct teachers training to 69 teachers in Batangas and Pampanga who will manage the school based program addressing the social cost of migration on the children left behind. The schools sign a Memorandum of Agreement with Atikha committing them to initiate the program for children of overseas Filipinos after the training program. Atikha visits the schools and monitor and mentor them after the seminar. Atikha has already trained 120 teachers in Batangas, Laguna, Cavite and Pampanga and we have 40 partner schools in these provinces. Our partner schools have a population of 20% to as high as 80% of children of overseas workers (Dizon 2011).

In their education modules, the teachers, social workers and children do several activities that teach the children on the value of money, savings and the hardships that their parents are experiencing for their families back home. One such activity is a role-playing game in which the children role play the typical workday of a domestic helper in Hong Kong and through this activity, realize the hardship and busy work day that their migrant parents are experiencing for their families back home. These activities socialize the children on the hardships of migration, but at the same time learn practical lessons for their parents' eventual reintegration.

### 6.4. Reimagining the Filipino Nation through Diaspora Nationalisms

After discussing the dynamics between the contending diaspora nationalisms on their views and approaches on migration and development, this section will analyze how the diaspora experience has led to the reimagining of the Filipino nation. As the previous sections have shown, whenever official and alternative nationalism debates on issues related to migration and development, the "nation" that they refer to is not the Filipino nation per se, but rather they focus on the state. In particular, they discuss the macro-national issues related to migration and development: the potential of diaspora philanthropy, the importance of social remittances for social entrepreneurship, and state policies on labor export and reintegration programs. While these issues are important, what these discussions fail to focus on is how migrants and their families view the nation, since they simply assume that migrants are passive receptacles of state propaganda and advocacy campaigns. As such, this dissertation seeks to know: How do migrants reimagine the Filipino nation? Where do they place themselves within this reimagined nation? What is the effect of the diaspora experience in the reimagining of the nation? These questions will be addressed in the next section by analyzing the major themes from case studies.

#### 6.4.1. Primacy of Demotic Nationalism: *Bansa* and the *Bayan*

NGOs and activists always extol the agency of migrants: how they are becoming empowered by their criticisms to the state's policy of labor export or on the other hand, through their engagement in various social entrepreneurial projects for community development. But the irony is that although these advocacy groups portend to speak for or speak with the migrants, they haven't asked the crucial question on whether migrants themselves see any conflict of interest whenever they engage in small-scale 'investment' projects or devote their time and energy mostly for donations and philanthropic activities.

This dissertation argues that although the various migrant activists groups are correct in engaging in theoretical and policy debates on the value of migrant reintegration, social enterprises and community development, they are ultimately engaging in meta-nationalist projects (*bansa*) in which the common migrant and their

families are not all that interested. Rather their concern lies in the micro-nationalist projects (*bayan*), which although doesn't have macro-economic level impacts in bringing national development or in addressing push factors of unemployment in the home communities, it nevertheless has a discernible impact to their families and home town.[161]

Reiterating that although remittances and micro-enterprises such as jeepneys, tricycle transport services or *sari-sari* stores (informal small scale neighborhood stores) have little impact in terms of long-term economic development, this research agrees with Lopez' assertion that it such small scale initiatives and activities nevertheless builds social capital and social embeddedness within members to their communities (2005). This contrast to what some critics point out: namely that diaspora philanthropy focuses more into infrastructure projects rather than job creation (EUI 2008), which shows that such studies have underlying assumptions that meta-nationalist projects are more important than micro-level social endeavors.

As the data from the case studies show, for the migrants, investing and pooling their extra income to help their communities and building small-scale renovations of schools, parks and roads not only enhance social capital and social standing in their towns, in the end, these projects are more credible. By being more doable, it veers away from the problems that facing macro-national projects such as concerns of sustainability, state capture or even the utopian hope that diaspora financed entrepreneurship will replace the need for overseas employment. This is the reason why intermediate-level initiatives and projects, such as those by *Gawad Kalinga* and *Atikha*; and the more traditional philanthropy programs, whether it is through state agencies, such as the Linkapil or by HTA-organized gift giving activities are more popular and resonant among migrants.

[161] Although the terms are similar, I am using these terms as heuristic devices in which *Bansa* refers to the country or state (meta-national level) while *Bayan* refers to the nation or in this case, the hometown (micro-national level). The flexibility of the word *Bayan* is similar to word *Patria*. Anderson explains this flexibility as: "*patria* is the wonderful Iberian word that can stretch from 'home-village,' through 'home-town' and 'home-region,' on to 'home-country' (1998:60).

In a study by Abinales localizing "long-distance nationalism" within the larger debates of nationalist dream versus resilient local realities, he argues that:

> Filipinos have become increasingly suspicious and critical of the politics of the national state but continue to love *Inang Bayan* (mother land), albeit as an entity that has been refracted into the prism of the town, the city, the province or the region. It is not anymore an either-or, nation-or-locality choice, but a blurred middle point with an unusual jostling between two identities (2010: 411).

This is also reflected with Aguilar ethnographic study of a Southern Luzon town in which he argues that for the town's people, they simple want a "*maalwang buhay*" (*maayos na buhay* or the good life), one that values migrant outcomes over larger political economic debates on migration and development (2009).

In discussing the contending nationalisms and their specific stance on the migration-development debate, it is important to highlight the demotic dimension as expressed by how migrants participate in these development initiatives. As the case studies and data shows, the most successful programs are those that do not offer large meta-national projects for nation building but rather the pragmatic initiatives.[162] This ranges from simple one-time donations and philanthropic activities (such as the LINKAPIL and HTA initiated donations) to more pragmatic financial literacy initiatives (such as those initiated by *Atikha*).

In the end, although government officials, migrant activists and social enterprise groups all have important arguments on the pros and cons of the migration-development nexus debate, these discussions are best left into the meta-nationalist table. Ultimately, it is the demotic dimension that triumph, wherein the migrants are concerned with their *bayan* over their *bansa* and the pragmatic goals that focus on outcomes: of being *panalo* over *talo*.

### 6.4.2. Reimagining the Global Filipino nation

#### 6.4.2.1. Locating the Global Filipino nation

One of the central premises of this dissertation is that the diaspora experience has greatly impacted on how the Filipino nation is being reimagined both by the Filipino

[162] An interesting exception is the success of *Gawad Kalinga* which is not a purely diaspora philanthropy nor a migration-development initiative. Rather it is part of a larger social renewal movement that is led by the middle class with Christian (Catholic) values.

diaspora living abroad and by their families and home communities in the homeland. As explained in the previous chapters and case studies, this Global Filipino nation is reimagined by diaspora communities in various host countries as existing within their adopted host countries, but at the same time is also reimagined as existing in the homeland as well.

In the review of related literature and previous case studies, it has shown that Filipino diaspora communities still maintain strong ties to the homeland. Studies discuss how Filipino diaspora communities all over the globe imagine a global Filipino community, whether it is long-distance citizens living in the US (Okamura 1998) or as global communities of domestic helpers (Parrenas 2001a, 2001b), seafarers (Swift 2011) and entertainers (Parrenas 2010, Suzuki 2003, 2002). Indeed, what is true for the Filipino diaspora is also true for other diaspora groups across history, in which these migrants leave their homeland and as the years pass by, they began to imagine their homeland in the original snapshot that has been impressed to them during the exact time of departure of their migrant journey (Kleinschmidt 2003).

While these studies focus on the imagining of the nation according to the diaspora living abroad, what it doesn't focus on is how the Philippine nation, the homeland itself begins to reimagine itself due to the diaspora experience as a whole. This is especially true to families of migrants left behind in their home communities in the homeland. While they themselves are not migrants themselves, these families and home communities are indeed part of the migrant journey and diaspora experience. This is evidenced by the amount of remittances they receive, as it affects their children (Asis 2004a), their receiving of gifts and *balikbayan* boxes (Pabico 2005, Blanc 1994), and above all how these home communities benefit from diaspora philanthropy and social remittances which led to the debates on migration and development.

As discussed in this chapter, these home communities not only have high concentrations of migrants going to the same destinations by virtue of chain migration patterns, as evidenced by the presence of the so-called Italian village in Mabini, Batangas (Dizon-Anuevo 2011, New York Times 2010); above all their migrant journey has led to the reimagining of their home communities as being attached to their family

members host communities abroad by virtue of physical artifacts and friendly signs reminding everyone that the newly renovated school or the Christmas donation drives was collected from their hometown communities in Hong Kong and Japan.

As such, the existence of these cross-border transnational linkages have led the migrants working abroad and their families and home communities in the homeland to reimagine that the borders of their nation has gone beyond the Philippines nation state, towards a truly Global Filipino nation. Indeed, this concept of the reimagining of a Global Filipino nation already had its theoretical seeds sewn from studies such as Aguilar (1996) which argues that the Philippines' National Other has gone beyond the US, to be replaced by the whole world. Indeed, every Filipino in the homeland takes pride that they have a relative who works and lives in practically all corners of the globe and that if not for the sacrifice and skill of the Filipino people, global health care chains, shipping and service sectors will be affected. Furthermore, this also coincides with Hedman and Sidel's discussion that the diaspora experience has become new source of nationalism (2000).

#### 6.4.2.2. Deconstructing "Imagined Communities"

This chapter shows evidence to support the main theme of this study that argues that the Filipino diaspora experience has led to the reimagining of the Filipino nation. Deconstructing Anderson's imagined communities (2003), this chapter has shown that it has gone beyond the four main themes presented by Anderson, namely that of imagined, limited, sovereign and community.

Deconstructing "imagined", the nation is being reimagined not only by migrants who have been working and living abroad, but above all by their home communities in the Philippines, such as families of migrants left behind and communities that have benefitted from migration and development initiatives. Due to the large impact of the diaspora experience, these families and home communities have begun to reimagine the nation as an entirely new entity. Deconstructing "limited", due to the Philippine diaspora experience, more and more Filipinos have begun to reimagine the nation as existing beyond the limited borders of the Philippine nation-state. Indeed, with the Filipino diaspora making up over ten percent of the population and scattered in almost

all corners of the globe, the concept of a truly Global Filipino nation is taking hold. In this sense, the Filipino nation has become unlimited and inclusive in its scope, with the nation becoming deterritorialized.

Deconstructing "sovereign", when before it was the state that had primacy over the Philippine diaspora experience, the years have shown that while the state plays a big role, overall it does not hold sway as it used to. Although the state and advocacy groups continually debate on the merits of the migration-development nexus and call for migrant heroes to contribute or protest against the state, migrants do think for themselves. This is evidenced by how they continually negotiate and have multiple stances regarding migration and development programs. As have been clearly shown in this chapter, migrants are shaped by pragmatic values. Indeed the case studies have shown that they are more concerned on having a successful migrant journey (*panalo*) rather than fighting over the policy points on migration and development.

Deconstructing "community", the Global Filipino nation is described as having an expansive community that shares strong horizontal bonds. These bonds are not based on the state with its formal citizenship status and laws; rather the community is based on Filipino identity, Filipinoness and shared lived diaspora experiences. Therefore, this extends to diaspora communities whether it is in Hong Kong, Japan or their home communities. Furthermore, this sense of community is based not on the state level (*bansa*), but rather on the more grass-roots level (*bayan*). This is exemplified when it has been shown that the meta-national debates (*bansa*) by the state and advocacy groups are not as important to migrants - rather it is their own families and home communities they are concerned about (*bayan*).

In summary, this chapter discussed the impact of migration and development initiatives by the state, advocacy groups and diaspora communities towards their home communities in the Philippines. By addressing the literature gaps on migration and development studies, this chapter has clearly shown how migrants themselves have very pragmatic views on the impact of their migrant journey's towards their families and home communities, highlighting the primacy of their pragmatic views that focuses on maximizing positive outcomes, rather than the macro-national and meta-narrative

debates on migration and development between the state and advocacy groups. Furthermore, the primacy of demotic nationalism, together with the impact of the diaspora experience to home communities in the homeland, has led both migrants and even people in the home communities itself to reimagine a truly demotic Global Filipino nation.

In closing, this chapter together with the other substantive case studies in chapters four and five, has shown the in spite of the differing context faced by diaspora communities in East Asia, demotic nationalism has primacy over the diverging diaspora nationalisms, and more over, it has led to the reimagining of the Filipino nation. The final chapter of this dissertation will sum up the main arguments and themes of this dissertation and will also present some implications for future research.

## Chapter Seven
## Revisiting the Filipino Diaspora Experience in East Asia

### 7.1. Relevance of Diaspora Nationalism and the Reimagining of the Nation

Imagine a Filipino who had been living and working abroad for several years. Let us assume that this Filipino already had decided to settle and is re-united with his family in his adopted country. Where does his national feelings and loyalties lie? Is it still with the old homeland, or is it with the new adopted host country? Assuming that his loyalties still lies in the old homeland, how does he express and portray his love of country?

Of course, it is expected that he constantly keep in touch with the homeland. He should be aware of its current events. He should be a "hero" and send his hard earned remittances for the economic growth of the nation. He should donate and do philanthropic activities. He should invest and contribute to the homeland through entrepreneurial activities. He should be a *Bagong Bayani*. If he doesn't do so, then he is seen a traitor who turned his back to the homeland.

Although this may seem an image of the ideal migrant Filipino, most Filipinos are also quite critical of the Philippine state. They are tired of its corruption and backward socio-political conditions. They do not miss the inefficiencies and corruption that stands in contrast to the economic progress and political transparency of their adopted countries. For some, it is exactly the absence or lack of prospects in the homeland that they chose to embark on their migrant journey. Still for some they are jaded and critical of the Philippine state's dependence to migrant remittances, which fails to neither provide protection nor offer genuine work alternatives for migrants in the homeland. Thus, for some of these migrants, they are activists and are critical of the state. They do not approve of the *Bagong Bayani*, and see themselves as martyrs who blame the state for its weaknesses and exploitative policies.

While this dichotomy exists, one wonders, is this all there is for our Filipino migrant? Does he only have one choice, to be either pro or anti-state? To be either homeland-oriented or completely assimilated to the new adopted host country? Where

does his identity and patriotic loyalties lie? Is he limited to choosing binaries between patriot-traitors, host-home country, of being either a permanent-contractual migrant?

This thesis addressed the seemingly rigid dichotomy that is dominant in the literature on Filipino migration and diaspora studies by proposing three ideal types of nationalisms directed towards the migrants. These three ideal types of diaspora nationalisms are: official nationalism, alternative nationalism and a new proposed new theory, demotic nationalism. From the word *demotic* which means "everyday", this research highlighted the grey areas that lie in between and overlap the conceptual boundaries of official and alternative nationalism. Arguing that demotic nationalism is neither pro nor anti-state, rather it is defined by its negotiated nature. It is dynamic, fluid and differs depending on the actor involved.

After discussing the contending nature of these three ideal types, this thesis then argued that although demotic nationalism has primacy over the older forms of official and alternative nationalism, it nevertheless does not signal the demise of the other forms of nationalism. Rather, this thesis showed that as a consequence of the intermingling and interplay of this diaspora nationalism, then the ultimate symbol of nationalism - the Filipino nation - is by itself is also being reimagined as a totally new entity. This reimagined nation, the Global Filipino nation, is reimagined as being deterritorialized, which is not based on formal citizenship or nationalistic ideological persuasions, but above all on the shared lived experiences of being a migrant, of being part of the diaspora and the larger Global Filipino community.

As such, this dissertation showed two original theoretical conceptions that addressed the literature gap on Filipino diaspora studies: 1) the existence of three ideal types of diaspora nationalism, and 2) the presence of an imagined Global Filipino nation in which even the Filipino nation itself is reimagined - one that encompasses those in the territorial homeland and in Filipino diaspora communities across the globe. In order to elucidate these concepts, this thesis focused on case studies in East Asia. By specifically focusing on the under theorized case studies of Filipinos in Hong Kong and Japan together with their long-distance ties to their home communities in the Philippine

homeland, this thesis will showed the primacy of demotic nationalism, and how these diaspora groups have began to reimagine a truly demotic Global Filipino nation.

## 7.2. Contribution to Academic Literature

### 7.2.1. Theoretical contribution

As discussed from chapters one to three, this research aims to contribute to the theoretical body of diaspora studies, particularly by focusing on the understanding and practice of nationalism among the Filipino diaspora in East Asia. One of the original theoretical contributions of this research is the usage of a typology of diaspora nationalisms. While scholars have already discussed the presence of both official and alternative nationalism as directed towards the migrants, this research introduces the concept of the demotic nationalism. By combining Baumann's approach that highlights the demotic dimension for discourse analysis (1996), together with Hedman and Sidel's discussion on how the migrant experience has become the new basis for a shared popular nationalism (2000), this research shows that a truly demotic nationalism exist among the Filipino diaspora communities in East Asia.

Another theoretical contribution of this research is its focus on the reimagining of the Filipino nation itself. Indeed, most of the literature focuses on the reimagining of shared diasporic identities (such as global healthcare workers, domestic helpers, entertainers, *balikbayans*, OFW, etc.) and how it translates towards their imagining of being part of a global Filipino diaspora. Also, there have been studies that focus on how the Filipino diaspora exists within various host communities across the globe. While these studies are important, there is nevertheless a literature gap since no studies has attempted to focus on the Filipino nation and homeland. Indeed, the Filipino nation is the ultimate source of nationalism, and yet, this pioneering research argues that the nation itself is being reimagined due to the extent of the Filipino diaspora experience in East Asia.

By focusing on the diaspora experience in East Asia, this research highlights how studies focusing on the Filipino diaspora communities in East Asia are under theorized. While the body of research on Filipino communities in East Asia is rich, they often focus on the changing contexts and face of these communities as the years pass by. Other

research meanwhile has focused on the labor migrant policies of both the sending and receiving countries and how civil society groups work for migrant advocacy. While these studies are important, again, no research has attempted to create a unified theory to interpret the recent changes of the Filipino diaspora in East Asia. This dissertation addresses the theoretical gaps by using the analytical framework of diaspora nationalisms and the reimagining of the Filipino nation to create a unified theory among the diaspora communities in East Asia.

### 7.2.2. Substantive contribution

Other than the theoretical contributions, various substantive contributions were also accomplished by this research. Although much research has been done on the Filipino diaspora in East Asia, most of the literature has focused mainly on several themes. This includes research that focus on how migrants exhibit agency through their support groups and settlement in their new host communities; research that focus on the labor flows and policies of export and control by the sending and receiving states; and studies that focus on the theoretical and policy debates on labor export and migration and development. While these studies have done groundbreaking research, they often take for granted the role of nationalism which is unfortunate since nationalist discourses plays a very big role and is often the main basis for the thematic debates on migration engaged by both state and advocacy groups. Furthermore, these studies also take for granted the views of migrants, particularly since they do not consider the demotic dimension on how migrants understand and negotiate their situations.

As such, this research was able to fully elucidate new substantive data through the approach of using diaspora nationalisms. Furthermore, the use of diaspora nationalisms as analytical framework has clearly shown the primacy of demotic nationalism. This is expressed in the substantive chapters of this research. In chapter four, the case studies has shown that although Hong Kong is the seat of OFW activism in Asia, migrants are gradually moving beyond protest movements and advocacy works, highlighting their pragmatic choices. In chapter five meanwhile, the primacy of demotic nationalism is shown by how diaspora communities in Japan are all reacting towards the negative images promoted by the *Japayuki* discourse and attempts to go beyond the themes of victimhood that is given credence by both Japanese and Filipino advocacy

groups and government agencies. Then in chapter six, the voices of migrants are analyzed, showing that rather than engaging in the macro level debates of migration and development, most migrants prioritize the micro level that focus on their families and home communities, reflecting their negotiated stance and pragmatism.

As this section has clearly shown, the analytical framework used to highlight both the primacy of demotic nationalism and the reimagining of the nation in all the chapters has been useful and effective in addressing the literature gap and answering the main research questions of this dissertation. The next section will discuss and summarize the main arguments of this research and how the chapters were able to answer the main research questions.

### 7.3. Analyzing the Main Arguments

#### 7.3.1. Primacy of Demotic Nationalism and the Reimagining of the Filipino Nation

The first three chapters of this dissertation lay the theoretical and analytical framework used for this research. One of the proposed points of this research is the existence of demotic nationalism as a distinct typology from official and alternative nationalism. However in analyzing the main substantive chapters, the case studies show the primacy of demotic nationalism.

In chapter four, the data summarizes the contending diaspora nationalisms among the state, advocacy groups and migrant associations within Hong Kong. Indeed, the capacity for advocacy work and mass mobilizations for migrant rights highlights the assertion that Hong Kong is indeed the cradle of OFW activism (Rother 2009c). While this might be the case, further analysis of the data shows that in spite of the strength of advocacy groups, for migrants themselves, they have gone beyond the scope of migrant activism. Indeed, the trends show that for most migrants, they are already not as engaged in protest actions and have to realize that instead of protesting, they can simply go to other labor destinations through the process of step-migration. Above all, the primacy of demotic nationalism was manifested by their pragmatic views even for migration and development issues, which is the key debate among the state and advocacy groups. The demotic dimension is summarized by the adage: "I came to Hong Kong to work, and not to become an activist".

Contrasting to chapter four, the fifth chapter presents an interesting comparative point. In chapter five, while the context of dynamics among the state, advocacy groups and diaspora communities are completely different from the Hong Kong experience, it nevertheless also reflects the main trend in the previous chapter, namely the primacy of demotic nationalism. Similar to the Hong Kong experience, the Filipino diaspora in Japan also has a strong pragmatic streak that is reflected not on how they go beyond activism, but rather how they go beyond the narratives of victimhood. In this case, the specter of the Japayuki discourse is what haunts the Filipino diaspora community, leading them to explicitly reject the vestiges of victimhood and work toward their redemption and integration to the larger Japanese host society.

Lastly, while chapters four and five discuss the experience of the diaspora community while living abroad, the sixth chapter returns to the homeland by focusing on the home communities of the diaspora communities in East Asia. Similar to how the diaspora community in Hong Kong and Japan is the ideological and conceptual battleground between the state and advocacy groups, the contending views and approaches of the state and advocacy groups are clearly highlighted in their debates regarding the migration and development nexus. While chapter four shows how migrants have gone "beyond activism" and chapter five meanwhile shows them going "beyond victimhood", this chapter showed how diaspora communities have gone "beyond meta-national narratives". This was expressed in the sense that although both the state and advocacy groups have made headways and advances on their specific positions regarding the migration and development debate, the migrant is not at all interested in their meta-national debates on the merits of migration and development. Rather they are interested in the micro-level, in their hometowns and their families. For them, their priority lies not on helping the nation nor protesting against the state, rather they are interested in maximizing their migrant outcomes and coming home as a true "*panalo*".

As the previous chapters have clearly shown, demotic nationalism has primacy over the state and advocacy groups. However, while this might be the case, it would be wrong to assume that since demotic nationalism has primacy, then it has "won" over the

state and advocacy groups. Rather what this research shows is that the contending three diaspora nationalisms has melding together and led to the reimagining of the Filipino nation itself.

Using Anderson's imagined communities (2003), this research deconstructs its four main points, mainly that of imagined, limited, sovereign and community. Looking back from the substantive chapters, this research shows that 1) imagined: it is not only Filipino identity and nationalism that is reimagined, but above all the Filipino nation itself is being reimagined, 2) limited: the diaspora experience has clearly shown that the nation is becoming more unlimited and inclusive in character and also deterritorialized in various dimensions, 3) sovereign: although the state still plays a big role in the Philippine diaspora, its position is now relatively weaker and not absolute. This shows not the primacy of the state, but rather the primacy of the diaspora communities itself, and lastly, 4) community: the nation as becoming an expansive community with strong horizontal bonds which are not based on state, but rather on the Filipino identity, Filipinoness and shared lived experiences.

### 7.3.2. Summarizing the Main Points

#### 7.3.2.1. First Argument

> While the state and civil society groups attempts to reach out to the Filipino diaspora by promoting their own conceptualization of what constitutes the Filipino nation, Filipino identity and the specific role of migrants within their own national and state-building projects through discourses of official and alternative nationalist regimes, Filipino migrants themselves understand and practice a form of demotic nationalism. Although not necessarily in contention with the state and advocacy groups, migrants themselves have their own negotiated understandings of these contending nationalisms which are pragmatic and concerned with positive outcomes, rather than the normative and macro-level debates on migration and development between the state and civil society.

This dissertation theorizes the presence of contending diaspora nationalism as promoted by the state, advocacy groups and diaspora communities. Due to the contending and conflicting nature of these typologies, it would be natural to ask who "won" in the battle towards the hearts and minds of the Filipino diaspora. This dissertation shows through its case studies the primacy of demotic nationalism, one that is described as pragmatic and negotiated understanding of nationalism by migrants themselves. However in closer analysis, although demotic nationalism has primacy, no one social actor has "won" in these contending diaspora nationalisms. Rather, they all combine and lead to the reimagining of the Filipino nation as a whole.

#### 7.3.2.2. Second Argument

> The Filipino diaspora experience has led not just to the reimagining of the Filipino migrant as being part of a specific migrant identity or the larger Filipino diaspora, but above all the reimagining of the Filipino nation itself. This reimagining of the nation is brought about by the shared lived diaspora experience and the dynamics of the contending and melding diaspora nationalisms.

Other than theorizing the typologies of diaspora nationalism, the impact of the diaspora experience towards the reimagining of the Filipino nation is a truly unique phenomenon. Indeed, while much literature has already discussed the primacy or agency of migrants and to an extent, how migrants react to the calls for nationalism directed towards them, there has been no literature that focus on reimagining and changing conception of the homeland itself as brought about by the diaspora experience. This together with the typologies and the melding of diaspora nationalisms will be one of the original contributions of this dissertation.

#### 7.3.2.3. Third Argument

> The primacy of demotic nationalism, together with the shared lived diaspora experience has led to the reimagining of the nation as a being a Global Filipino nation. This reimagined nation is seen as being deterritorialized, "unlimited"/inclusive and having expansive community

which is not centered on the Philippine state, but rather on the primacy of Filipino identity, Filipinoness and shared lived diaspora experiences.

As this dissertation will show in the succeeding case study chapters, the discourses and narratives of the Balikbayan and Bagong Bayani was used by the state to promote its own agenda and initiatives toward migrants. On the other hand, advocacy groups have also used these same discourses as a criticism to the state's labor migration policies and its lack of protection towards migrants. While both the state and advocacy groups through official and alternative nationalisms use the Balikbayan and Bagong Bayani to promote their agendas, the emergence of the Global Filipino is a symbol of the combined aspects of these previous discourses. Being cosmopolitan, deterritorialized and yet still Filipino nationalistic in character, the Global Filipino highlights how the sense of community is reimagined towards one that blurs the lines and extends towards deep horizontal ties among the Filipino diaspora in the region and in the world.

## 7.4. Limitations and Implications for Further Research

### 7.4.1. Limitations of the Study and Potential Areas for Further Studies

This dissertation can be described as being highly theoretical and conceptual, since it uses as an approach that introduces a new theory on diaspora nationalism to analyze the changing dynamics and phenomenon of the Filipino diaspora in East Asia. As an initial step, this approach highlighted the demotic dimension among migrants, and elucidated substantive findings by focusing on the case studies among the Filipino diaspora in Hong Kong, Japan and in their home communities in the Philippines. Although the main research questions and literature gaps were addressed by using the framework on diaspora nationalism and the reimagining of the Filipino nation, it would be interesting to use this same framework on diaspora nationalism for further research. In particular, this approach of using the typologies of diaspora nationalisms can be used for comparative purposes by focusing on other diaspora community case studies across the world. This comparative approach could be expanded to other Filipino diaspora communities in Asia, such as the other major destinations of Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and the Middle East. On the other hand, exploring specific thematic studies and issues rather than area case studies could also expand other research.

Looking back into the research process for this dissertation, one of the main limitations of this study is the need for more rigor and quantifiable factors on diaspora nationalisms. Largely due to the novelty of the approach, using various perception and opinion surveys can employ a more quantitative methodology. By using the initial trends and findings from the qualitative methods used in this dissertation, it could be used as a springboard for more studies emphasizing representativeness.

### 7.4.2. Implications for Further Research and Policy Making

One of the main strengths of this research is that the diaspora nationalism approach does not take for granted the assumptions held by the state and advocacy groups regarding actions and views of the migrants. By focusing on the real voices and the demotic dimension of the diaspora communities, it could greatly benefit further research. In the case of state agencies, an approach using the demotic dimension will produce more balanced, humane and participative policies for diaspora communities. For advocacy groups meanwhile, an approach using the demotic dimension can be used to reframe advocacy campaigns, which are better attuned to the real voices and needs of migrants. Indeed, using approach on diaspora nationalism can be used to highlight the pragmatism that is prevalent for these migrants and various Filipino diaspora groups across the world.

Although the approach of using diaspora nationalisms for diaspora research still has room for refining and methodological fine-tuning, this approach has a lot of potential for further research - whether it be for quantitative or qualitative research, research for state agencies or advocacy groups, and research for the host-nation, home-nation and the regional level as well.

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## Appendix

### List of Interviews

Abdon-Tellez, Cynthia C. 2009. Interview with MFMW Director Cynthia Ca Abdon-Tellez. May 27, 2009. Cynthia Abdon-Tellez is the director of the Mission for Migrant Workers in Hong Kong. She was been living and working in Hong Kong since the 1990's and have seen the shifting trends among the Filipino migrant advocacy sector especially on their views on migration and development initiatives.

APL 2009. Interview with the Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL) Coordinator in Hong Kong. May 29, 2009. This migrant advocate worked as the representative of the APL, a labor union based in Manila, within the AMC during the early part of the 2000's. She requested that her name not be included in this thesis since she is quite critical on some of the policies and approaches of the AMC in the recent years, particularly on issues related to migrant savings and investments. Since the interview, she has left the AMC and was planning to return to the Philippines.

ATIS 2009. Interview with Ma'am Donna, Vicky and Karing of the Abra Tingulan Ilocano Society (ATIS). May 31, 2009. Donna, Vicky and Karing were some of the most active members and officers of the ATIS, an HTA from the northern province of Abra from the Philippines. ATIS has been an active member of the UNIFIL coalition and regularly joins protest and advocacy activities of their coalition.

Ceradoy, Aaron. 2009 Interview with Aaron Ceradoy of APMM. May 28, 2009 and December 4, 2009. Ceradoy is one of the most dynamic and active migrant advocates in Hong Kong. Cheerful, friendly and well-liked, Ceradoy is well respected by his peers and also actively supports their party-list organization Migrante of the national democratic movement in the Philippines.

Chua, Leslie. 2012. Skype Interview with a long-time migrant rights advocate and former officer at a migrant NGO, the Resource Center for Philippine Concerns (RCPC). November 21, 2012. Chua was the former project coordinator and head of the gender and counseling program of the Research Center for Philippine Concerns (RCPC) and was the founder of the Zainichi Firipin Josei Network during her stay in Japan from 1987 until 1998.

Cunanang, Rima. 2009. Interview with Rima Cunanang of UPHK. May 28, 2009. Cunanang is one of the senior officers of the UPHK, an HTA that has been active in doing advocacy and migrant support work in Hong Kong. Unlike other full-time migrant activist, Cunanang has been working as a full-time domestic helper in Hong Kong since the 1980's. In our discussions on family life and her work in Hong Kong, she mentions that although she was planning to come home and "retire" for good, she decided to continue her work since she is still providing for her grandchildren in her hometown. She is well-respected and is seen as the senior auntie of everyone in the UNIFIL migrant advocacy network. Other than her advocacy work, she has been active in pursuing fund-raising activies for migrant philantrophy.

Dizon-Anonuevo, Mai. 2009. Interview with Atikha Executive Director Mai Dizon-Anonuevo. June 11, 2009. As executive director of Atikha, Dizon-Anonuevo has worked with migrant issues since the 1990's and founded Atikha after working with several missionaries and like-minded migrant advocates working for migrant workers from Italy. Unlike other migrant advocacy NGOs, Atikha focuses on the families left behind with their programs on educating children of migrants and courses on financial literary having a big impact to Filipino families in Mabini, Batangas and San Pablo, Laguna.

Garcia, Felicidad. 2010. Interview with Filipino ALT working with the local board of education (BOE) of Tsukuba. August 2, 2010. A former mombukagasho scholar, Garcia became an ALT after her studies at the University of Tsukuba. As one of the pioneering ALTs in Tsukuba, she was already an ALT even before the Filipino boom of the mid-2000's.

Guevarra, Nancy. 2010. Interview with former Filipino ALT who is now based in New Zealand. October 14, 2010. A former World Bank scholar who graduated from the University of Tsukuba, Guevarra was one of the most active Filipino ALTs in the southern Kanto region. As one of the founders of the Filipino ALT organization in Tsukuba, she provided much help to the newer batch of Filipino ALTs. Before leaving for New Zealand, Guevarra together with her husband, who was also an ALT, worked in several ALT placement agencies and were assigned to various primary schools in southern Ibaraki.

Manzala, Teresita. 2009. Interview with Atty. Teresita Manzala, June 16, 2009. Manzala is the head of the National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO), an attached agency under the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). Manzala mentioned that the NRCO always had a problem getting funding for its projects for migrant entrepreneurship and re-integration but finally got financial support after the Lehman financial shock of 2008.

Nisperos, Sr. Felicitas. 2009. Interview with DPCF Director Sr. Felicitas Nisperos. May 30, 2009. Sister Nisperos is a Catholic nun and director of the Diocesan Pastoral Center for Filipinos (DPCF) of the Catholic diocese in Hong Kong. As the most senior officer of the DPCF, Nisperos has worked with several migrant advocacy groups and has been instrumental in lending support to the coalition led by the UNIFIL and APMM in Hong Kong.

Perez, Juan. 2012. Interview with Cultural Worker and Artist at the Irregular Rhythm Asylum, Shinjuku. November 23, 2012. Perez was a former activist from the Philippines who is now in Japan as a part-time laborer and cultural worker with ties to both Filipino and Japanese advocacy groups in Japan.

Philippine National Bank (PNB) Officials. 2009. Interview with bank officials and executives from the Philippine National Bank (PNB) – Hong Kong branch. May 27, 2009. During our interview at the PNB branch office in Hong Kong, these bank officials were very helpful and insightful on their views related to migrant advocacy campaigns, migrant savings and the potential of remittances for entrepreneurship. Most of them already have permanent residency status in Hong Kong and are active in socio-civic organizations.

Reyes, Bernard. 2010. Interview with Filipino ALT working in elementary schools in Tsuchiura, hired under a placement agency. July 21, 2010 and August 2, 2010. Reyes first came to Japan as a nikkeijin and worked in various manufacturing jobs in Tsukuba and other parts of southern Ibaraki. Although the salary in manufacturing has been satisfactory, he prefers his ALT work and sees it as an avenue for better social integration in Japan. He and his wife, who is also an ALT, are now a permament residents and live as a family in Tsuchiura.

Roque, Val. 2009. Interview with Vice-Consul Val Roque. June 1, 2009. Roque is the vice-consul in charge of Assistance to Nationals (ATN) section of the consulate. As ATN head, he constantly receives requests for assistance among Filipinos and is always on call 24/7.

Salvador, Matthew. 2012. Interview with the founder of a Filipino teachers support group in the Kanto region and and ESL Trainer at Koto Ward, Tokyo. November 25, 2012. Salvador, specializes in childrens' English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and is an experienced trainer of foreign and Filipino Assistant Language Teachers (ALT) in Japan.

Santiago, Clarence 2012. Interview with the former Head of Center for Japanese Filipino Families (CJFF) at Shinjuku. November 26, 2012. Santiago is the former head of the Center for Japanese Filipino Families (CJFF), a Filipino NGO that provides services and advocacy work for long-term residents in Japan, Japanese-Filipino youth and the Filipino victims of the March 11, 2011 Tsunami and Nuclear Disaster in the Tohoku region.

Tondares, Jose Edison. 2009. Interview with Linkapil Coordinator Jose Edison Tondares. June 19, 2009. Tondares is the senior officer at the CFO Manila office and is the head coordinator of their Linkapil program. He has been working closely with various NGOs and advocacy groups and frequently visits various beneficiary sites of the Linkapil program all over the Philippines. He is quite proud of the Linkapil program and boasts that unlike other government programs, the Linkapil is well regarded by overseas Filipinos and has a proven track-record.

Torres, John. 2010. Interview with former Filipino ALT who is now based in Canada. August 6, 2010. Before leaving for Canada for a job in the hotel and hospitality sector, Torres worked in various manufacturing jobs in southern Ibaraki. Although he did not have any teaching experience prior to coming to Japan, he was part of the first wave of new Filipino ALTs in the mid-2000's. During that time period, he was also able to introduce potential Filipino ALT candidates to various placement agencies in the Kanto area.

Unlad Kabayan. 2009. Interview with NGO staff of Unlad Kabayan. June 17, 2009.

Villanueva, Eman. 2009. Interview with Eman Villanueva, member of UNIFIL-HK. December 8, 2009. Villanueva is one of the senior officers of the UNIFIL-HK, and like their other officers, Villanueva works as a full-time domestic helper. Although he mentions that he respects his counterparts from the rival migrant organization AMC, he is critical of their portrayal and promotion of programs related to migration and development.